

AN 117f
A P P E A L
T O

Common REASON and CANDOR,

In the Behalf of a

REVIEW:

Part the Second and Last.

WHEREIN

The OBJECTIONS commonly urged against a
Treatise intituled, FREE AND CANDID DIS-
QUISITIONS, are fairly considered:

By the

AUTHORS of that Treatise, and other FRIENDS
to their Cause.

To the whole are premised,

Some ESSAYS and LETTERS concerning the
indiscreet management of CONTROVERSIES.

*Answering them with as much wisdom and gentleness of
speech as ye are able: For walking among wolves, it concerns
you to be wise as serpents.*

Dr. Whitby on Eph. v. 16.

*Arment se contra, ac refellant hæc nostra, si possunt: Con-
grediantur cominus, & SINGULA QUÆQUE discutiant.*

Lactant. Instit. L. V.

L O N D O N:

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Continued from page 10

REV. A. I. E. W.

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MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

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2076

T O
The very reverend, learned, and worthy
G O V E R N O R S
O F T H E
C H U R C H E S
O F
ENGLAND and IRELAND;

These Considerations are humbly dedicated, in
support of the **FREE AND CANDID**
DISQUISITIONS.

Which,

If shewn to be ill-grounded, or to merit no
regard from those to whom they were
addressed, or from the Public; the Authors
do hereby promise to renounce, discounte-
nance, and condemn, in as free and open a
manner, as they have proposed them to the
consideration of both.

If this is not done,

They hope they may be permitted, with the same
reasonable liberty of British Subjects, which has
hitherto been graciously allowed them, to proceed
further in their inquiries, for the service of both
those **CHURCHES.**

GOVERNOR
OF THE
CHURCHES

AND
THE
CHURCHES

It is the duty of the Governor to see that the laws of the State are faithfully executed, and that the public peace and good order be maintained. He is also to see that the public lands are properly managed, and that the public debt be paid.

They have the honor to be permitted, with the Governor, to visit the State, and to see the public lands, and to see the public debt paid.

ADVERTISEMENT.

TO comply, in some measure, with the reasonable expectations of those who are friends, and with the unreasonable demands of those who are adversaries, to the cause of a Review, it is thought proper at this time to send the following papers into the world; with this only request to the former, that they would pray earnestly to God for the success of a cause, of whose truth and justice they are so well convinced; and to the latter, that for the credit of their opposition, as well as of themselves, they would hereafter forbear to be unfair, or at least to be uncivil. Both sides may be assured, that this cause will not be dropt, whilst there is just liberty allowed to maintain it. What is here offered will be a means, either to bring on a fair examination, or to convince the world, that the subject will not bear it. The promise of a second volume of Disquisitions (or of a collection of papers intended as a supplement to that work) is not forgotten. Present measures made it expedient to publish these in the mean while: Which otherwise might have lain dormant for a time, or have been sacrificed to oblivion for ever.

N. B.

N. B. No papers are here published without the consent of the respective Authors, communicated either by themselves or their friends: The same integrity of conduct was observed in the former volume, and in every thing that hath been published upon the subject, by those who were concerned in the *Disquisitions*.

NUMB. I.

A N

A P P E A L

T O

Common REASON and CANDOUR, &c.

N U M B. I.

Ut non arbitror contumeliosum à quoquam autore, quamlibet magno aut vetusto dissentire; ita non gravatim à meipso dissentiam, si quis adferat, quod sit rectius, etiamsi sit idiota qui doceat. Erasm.

CANDOR and ingenuity of mind, a willingness to hear reason, and receive truth when offered, are such engaging qualities, that we are at once enamoured with them, when they present themselves to our view, whether we meet with them in persons or in writings. There is something extremely agreeable and affecting in both, and an honest and good mind is naturally delighted, and cannot help being pleased, with objects so happily corresponding to its own native inclinations, and most deliberate judgment of things. For there is certainly a principle in our minds, which, if not perverted by wrong education, bad books, or disingenuous company, would incline us to be humane, candid, rational; and to allow fair consideration to every

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thing that is offered with reason, and with gentleness. It is generally owing to the unhappy impression made upon us by those three, or by one or other of them, whilst we are either incapable of judging, or else unwilling to be at the trouble of examining, that we are unawares led into errors; and not only prepossessed in their favour, and pre-determined to adhere to them, but prejudiced against all who shall offer us any sentiments that do in the least interfere with them, or would engage us in a fresh inquiry; how reasonable soever the proposals may be, and with whatever gentleness and decency they are submitted to our consideration.

I have been conversant in various sorts of writings, since I bent my mind to inquiries after truth; and have, I must own, been differently affected, sometimes, by those of different denominations, and the different arguments which they offered. In this case, my way for the most part has been, to take some time to *consider* after reading, and to weigh the arguments impartially on both sides, allowing myself the freedom to judge according to the best reason I had, and always endeavouring to find out the truth between opposite parties. This conduct has been of great service to me, and will, I doubt not, be so to others, who shall search for truth with an unprejudiced mind, and with a true desire of finding it. To cultivate and improve this excellent disposition in us, we shall find it to be of singular use, to converse with men of large minds, such as understand the Christian Religion in its true design and full latitude, and entertain a largeness of benevolence agreeable to its principles. Nor will it be of small advantage towards our improvement herein, to peruse the *writings* of such excellent men; which have a happy efficacy to dilate our understandings, enlarge our benevolence, and inspire us with every just and generous

generous sentiment. Of all the moderns, with whose writings I am in any degree acquainted, I can scarce recollect any, whose language, sense, and temper please me more, than the great *Erasmus*, whose words I have chosen for my motto *. Him therefore I intend to make the subject of my present paper, aiming more especially herein, to recommend piety, probity, ingenuity, and every other amiable quality, which shone with such attractive lustre in that excellent Man.

This universal Scholar, and sincere Christian, was a person of such extraordinary endowments of nature, that he stands at the head of the list of men of incomparable parts: And he so improved all his faculties by constant application, that he took in the whole compass of knowledge that was attainable in his days. He was at the same time so humane, so benevolent, so true a friend to religion and virtue, and to every thing that was valuable and useful, that he was justly beloved and esteemed by all who knew his worth, and had a regard for these excellent qualities which ennoble the mind of Man, and render him an ornament and a blessing to human society.

He lived in times of great contentions and struggles about Religion. For the Reformation was then just dawning upon the world, and beginning to diffuse its genial rays, where ignorance and superstition had long held men *under chains of darkness*, and precluded the light of the glorious Gospel from shining in upon their minds. In this important crisis, he had more than ordinary difficulties to contend with. For the partizans on both sides being so inveterate against each other, it was dangerous to

* Note, *Motto's*, in *this* volume, are inserted or omitted, *indifferently*, as the several authors or their friends thought proper.

intermeddle in the quarrel, or to offer any temperament as a means to keep both at peace. And yet how difficult was it to refrain, especially for a man who loved peace, and was so desirous to establish it among his fellow-christians! This was exactly the turn and temper of *Erasmus*, a true son of peace and of love, if any other ever was, and the most passionately desirous of the quiet and happiness of Christendom.

He tendered nevertheless his lenitives at proper times. But how was he hated and reviled for this, by the bigots of both parties? They almost demolished him, or rather, as he himself says, in the short account he gives us of his life, he was torne all to pieces by them both *: Such is generally the effect of party-rage, and so much does religious bigotry (of all others the most pernicious) tend to involve men in phrenzy, and to make them barbarians and bears to one another. In this sense only is that infidel reflection just, admitting for once a most egregious *misnomer*,

Tantum RELIGIO potuit suadere malorum!

As to his principles, he entertained those which appeared to him to be most agreeable to piety and charity. He did not give into the extreams of any party, but wisely took the liberty to judge and chuse for himself, acting herein like one of the *Eclectic* sect; which perhaps made the late Mr. *Collins* to insert him in his catalogue of Free-thinkers, though he was far from being one in *his* sense of the word. He kept his judgment in a state of neutrality, with regard to several of the points in debate between the *Lutherans* and *Papalians*; endeavouring to moderate

* *Discerptus ab utraque parte, dum utrique studet consulere.*

betwixt them, and to persuade them to mutual forbearance *. The *Copper-smiths* among the former (whose

* His judgment may be seen briefly set down, in a very charitable little treatise of his, intitled *De amabili ecclesiæ concordia*; where he endeavours with great mildness and moderation to abate the enmity of both parties, and to reduce them to terms of peace and forbearance, notwithstanding difference in opinion as to some things, and in practice as to others. — To give a short specimen or two of his great equity and candor. *Pii cujusdam affectus est credere preces ac bona opera viventium prodesse defunctis, præsertim si hæc illi dum viverent facienda curarunt, &c. At quibus hoc nondum persuasum est, ne obstrepant aliorum simplicitati, sed ipsi tanto benignius sublevent pauperum inopiam, tantoque ferventius incumbant bonis operibus, quod minus credunt defunctos vivorum beneficiis juvari. Religiosi item affectus est, credere sanctos, &c. nonnihil apud Deum posse. At quibus diversa sedit opinio, purâ mente sincerâque fide invocent Patrem, Filium & Spiritum Sanctum, ne obturbent odiosè iis qui citra superstitionem implorant divorum suffragia, &c. Again; Cui persuasum est, divorum imaginibus, quoniam non sentiunt, nihil habendum honoris, fruantur suo sensu: ne tamen obstrepant iis qui citra superstitionem sic venerantur imagines, eorum amore quos repræsentant, &c. In his Paulus opinor concederet, ut in suo quisque sensu acquiescat. Illud [interea] citra noxam omnibus potest inculcari, divos ac divas optimè coli imitando vitam illorum.* He next endeavours to moderate unbecoming zeal on both sides with regard to reliques, &c. and here laments the bigotry of some men. ‘ I knew, says he, a Divine who observing a person passing thro’ the Church-yard without pulling off his hat to the sign of the cross (which yet was not owing to disrespect, but to his being engaged in discourse) cried out with marvelous zeal to those that were with him, *I dare swear that that Man is a Lutheran.* Now this, says Erasmus, was not right,’ &c. And this is his calm manner of speaking all the way, in his endeavours, not to re-unite the two parties (which he well knew was impossible) but to prevail with them to exercise moderation and forbearance towards each other; which he would have reckoned a great point gained. Indeed it is thought (and very justly, as I conceive) that out of the earnestness of his zeal to promote peace, he went too far in some points, as may be seen by several passages in this very piece, wherein he shews himself much too favourable to the Romish superstition, &c. But we are to remember the times in which he lived, and particularly that wherein he wrote this little treatise,

(whose heat and vehemence he could never approve) *did him much harm*. He says they loaded him with insupportable obloquy and envy *. Yet whenever he thought proper to return answers to any of them, he always did it in the most obliging and candid manner, provoking no one, nor giving the least occasion to any to use him ill. And though he had been handled very roughly by some, yet he himself would use none so: Nor would he ever dip his pen in gall, or draw blood from his adversary, upon any account †. He was such a lover of quiet, and so desirous of making progress in useful literature, that he undervalued every thing in this world in comparison of that ease and liberty which were necessary to prosecute it. And yet both were denied him by the rude and illiterate herd of his time ‡, who could not endure the progress he was making, and the light he was letting in upon their *kingdom of darkness*.

In these times of epidemical ferment and opposition, there was something written by *Zuinglius*, the famous *Swiss* Divine, which was thought either to reflect upon *Erasmus*, or to oppose his sentiments in

tise, which was a time when the zeal and violence of parties carried men to great lengths, and made them forget the benign and forbearing spirit of the Christian Religion. — However, those whom he so charitably favoured, have not much favoured him, since they have represented him, in cuts and pictures, as hanging between heaven and hell; and it is also well known that they have delivered him over to the tormentors, viz. the *Expurgators*; whose merciless inquisition he has undergone, and under whose lasting execration he still lies, and is like long enough to continue.

* *Lutherana tragædia intolerabili illum oneravit invidia.*

† *In respondendo semper civilis erat; idque habebat sibi propositum, omnino sylum incruentum servare,*

‡ *Dignitatum ac divitiarum perpetuus contemptor fuit; neque quicquam prius otio ac libertate habuit. — Ob provehendas bonas literas, gravem invidiam suscinuit à barbaris & monachis.*

some

some things. I cannot now recollect the subject, nor is it very material ; though, if my memory doth not fail me, I think it was that great bone of contention, Transubstantiation. But whatever the subject was, *Erasmus* was immediately applied to, and earnestly importuned, to return his *answer*. The cause was undone, if he did not *answer*, and none more able than himself to do it. An *answer* therefore must be given by him. [This, by the way, is the humour of many men : *Answer, Answer : Reply, Reply : Rejoin, Rejoin* * ; or your character is lost, and our cause along with it.] Not so thought this wise and considerate man. There is no need of answering, when nothing is said that requires, or at least deserves, an answer : Nor will it be honest to answer what I cannot reasonably contradict, or may clearly discern to be wrong. — And indeed I suspect from his words (though I am not sure of the thing, not having the history now by me) that he was in some doubt about the matter. However, upon the whole, he frankly told his friends, that an answer from Him they were not to expect, however they might interpret his refusal, or whatever *Zuinglius* and his adherents should think. Not, says he, that I am afraid to engage with *Zuinglius*, or even ten such opponents † : But in plain truth, and in two words, I do not like the subject, nor do I

* The world is too often pestered with such writings. They do harm. They hurt religion, and mens tempers, and seldom set truth in a due light. It is much to be wished that men would forbear, and that more reflection might make them less ritigious. It was a wise and good Man who made this observation, well deserving notice, and a place here. *Authors should avoid, as much as they can, Replies and Rejoinders ; the usual consequences of which are, loss of time, and loss of temper. Happy is he who is engaged in controversy with his own Passions, and comes off superior.*

† *Quasi metuum vel decem Zuinglios, si res esset cordi, &c.*

love controversy. The noisy and dusty work of altercations he left to others who were more fond of it, and had been trained up in the low arts of chicane and scurrility, which he exceedingly detested.

Although he scarce ever wrote any thing that pleased him, yet (such is the temper of candid and good men) he entertained a favorable opinion of the writings of others *; and put the best construction upon every thing as far as it would bear. He avoided as much as possible all censoriousness; and abstained from all appearance of contumely and opprobrious language. For he thought the cause of truth had no need of it †. And he was ever ready to retract an error when it should be discovered to him ‡. A truly ingenuous temper this, and the indication of a great and generous soul!

Whenever he undertook to write upon a subject, if he found he was not clear in any point, he would not go on with it, till he had received the utmost satisfaction from those who were capable of giving it. And having been favoured with their assistance, he made just acknowledgments of the service done him, and expressed his gratitude in a public manner. Being less skilled in the Hebrew language, when he began to write upon the New Testament, he called in the aid of *Oecolampadius*, whom he knew to be a much greater proficient therein than himself; not presuming to give his sense of the sacred Writers,

* *Neque quicquam unquam scripsit, quod ipsi placeret. — Candidus alienæ doctrinæ estimator.*

† *Ita patrocinantes veritati, ut in neminem simus contumeliosi. — Videmus maximos etiam theologos nonnunquam & labi insigniter & hallucinari; — non uti quendam infestemur; qui morbus ab opere Christiano, imò à totâ vitâ Christianâ, quàm longissimè debet abesse. Præf. in Nov. Test.*

‡ *Nos ad utrumque juxta parati sumus; ut vel rationem reddamus, si quid rectè monuimus, vel ingenuè confiteamur errorem, si ubi lapsi deprehendimur. Ibid.*

till after he had thorowly examined them, and compared the Greek quotations in the New Testament with the original Hebrew in the Old. For he thought it was assuming to himself too great an authority, to pass his deciding *ipse dixi*, or confide in his own single judgment, in an affair of such importance. And therefore having recurred to the direction of his friend, and received his good offices, he afterwards did his character the justice it deserved *.

There was one thing very extraordinary in him, with regard to his sentiments of liberty, and the toleration of persons of different persuasions from his own. His great benevolence to his fellow-beings went beyond the common bounds; not those marked out by Nature and Christianity (which recommend a benevolence of large extent) but those which the penuriousness of mens charity have set to themselves, and which are seldom exceeded in common practice.

—Those who disbelieve the Christian Revelation, are for the most part, or too many of them, inveterate against it. The name of unbelievers is therefore generally odious to Christians, and justly so, where such adversaries are malicious. For, by the way, what room or what handle can there be for malice, against so good-natured, so benevolent, and so public-spirited a religion as the christian is? a religion also so well-grounded upon fact, as well as reason and equity, that the keenest malice can have

* *Nihil enim alienius ab ingenio moribusque meis, quàm ad exemplum Aesopicae corniculæ alienis me venditare plumi. Hac igitur in parte adjuti sumus operâ subsidiariâ viri non solum pietate, verùm etiam trium peritiâ linguarum eminentis, hoc est veri theologi Joan. Oecolampadii, quod ipse in literis Hebraicis nondum ed procefferam, ut mihi judicandi sumerem auctoritatem. — Denique testimonia Veteris Instrumenti, quæ non pauca citantur, &c. consulimus & excussimus. Ibid.*

nothing to say against it, if it be considered with that impartiality, and that seriousness, wherewith it ought to be considered. Now *Erasmus*, who was thorowly convinced of the truth and excellence of this religion, tho' he could not bear such unbelievers as were addicted to sneer and scorn and ridicule, yet could shew a due regard and benevolence to such as he found to be men of probity, civility, and candor. *Such is my temper*, says he, *that I can love even a Jew, provided he is in other respects sociable and friendly, and forbears saying any thing disrespectful of Christ in my company* *.——I find myself here at a stand, not knowing whether I may venture to propose this declaration to the love and esteem of modern Christians, or whether I may not fall under the censure and ill-will of some of them for reporting it on this occasion. But benevolence being my temper, as it was of *Erasmus*, I shall make that my just excuse for recommending what seems to me to be so amiable, and what I am persuaded is so serviceable to the good of mankind.

On such an occasion therefore let me be allowed a free but friendly interposal between Unbelievers and Christians, with respect to the point in view.——You, Gentlemen, of the unbelieving side, why will you be unfair, why will you be satyrical against the Christian religion? Has it deserved any ill treatment at your hands? Has it attempted to do any thing injurious to your interests? Has it proposed any thing for the hurt of human society?——If not, be easy; be at least civil, and less virulent, in your opposition. If, on the other hand, it aims at your greatest good; if it proposes the best doctrines and

* *Tali sum ingenio, ut vel Judæum amare possim, modò sit alioqui commodus convivor & amicus, nec me coram blasphemias evomat in Christum. Cat. lucubr.*

best precepts for the peace and happiness of the world; can you find in your hearts to be severe against such a religion? Can you rationally treat it with disesteem and contempt? or endeavour to excite the odium of others against it? You will understand me right, that I am speaking here of the Christian Religion itself, of that religion which is laid down in the Bible; where alone it is to be found in its truth and purity. — And as for you, my fellow-believers, of whatever sect or denomination; find an unbeliever who is calm, sedate, and rational; who offers no affront to your religion, nor treats it with ill manners; who is willing to hear with seriousness what you have to say in its behalf, and will behave with due regard to your persons and characters; — allow to this man freely the liberty of sentiment which he desires; converse with him upon amicable terms; reason with him, intreat him in love; offer him the strongest arguments you can, on the behalf of your religion; offer them in mildness and peace, and pray to God to direct him; — but go no further: Use not the least virulence or ill manners, lest you bring a contempt on the Christian name, and harden the disbeliever against it, and against whatsoever you can offer farther in its favour. — Upon the whole, neither side ought to be inveterate against the other. The dictates of Reason ought to be regarded by both, as being allowed by both. Now those recommend benevolence and forbearance, civility and fair treatment, and condemn the contrary practice. And it must be allowed by all, that the Christian Doctrine (which is intended to corroborate and improve reason) allows of nothing that is rude and uncivil, or that is passionate and bitter, in dealing with any that oppose it. The Christian rule is, *To be gentle to all men*, and to endeavour in the spirit of *meekness* and *benignity* to *instruct*

strut those that oppose themselves to the truth. No Christian is to go beyond this rule * : On the other hand, no opposer is to treat the Christian religion contemptuously, or to spit out blasphemy and obloquy against the blessed Author of it ; this being contrary to all good sense and good manners. Whoever disbelieves the Christian revelation, ought to have his reasons for his disbelief. Be his reasons what they will, he will find none to justify his unmannerly treatment of it, either in conversation or in writing, and ought therefore to refrain from such treatment in both. If he cannot assent to Christianity himself, he may at least allow others to entertain it, in consequence of their own approval and conviction †. None desire *Him* to entertain it against his will ; nor, if he has any objections against it, to suppress them, but rather to produce them freely, so long as he does it candidly, and without virulence. The sceptics in *Tully's* books *de natura deorum*, &c. are far more decent in their opposition to religion, than many who have since appeared on that side : And it can be no credit to modern adversaries, to shew a worse spirit than those did, to whom they are so much indebted for their arguments, and for whose character they profess so great a veneration.

* On this consideration, it should seem to be the *less honourable* in any adversaries of Christianity, to prosecute it with invectives and raillery ; since this is taking undue advantage, knowing that the professors of this religion are not allowed to make the like returns in their Answers, and are expressly tied down from every attempt of this nature. This consideration therefore should *restrain* men of any honor and generosity, from taking such advantage.

† *Proinde si cui non libet in his sacris versari deliciis* (may here be well applied, being the words of some candid and benevolent person) *certè ne obstrepat, ne obturbet, ne invideat meliora conantibus. Amplectantur ipsi quod amant, babeant, fruantur : nemo vetat : nos hæc illis non scripsimus.* Præfat. ubi supr.

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To look back towards *Erasmus*, and bring him once more in view. Having those two qualities in a high degree, which are so justly esteemed in the present age, *politeness* and a love of *liberty*, his character has the greater title to our regard, and his conduct to our imitation. His polite turn, both of thought and language, is sufficiently seen in his elegant writings : And for his love of truth, and regard to freedom of judgment, we need only recollect that admirable declaration set down at the head of this paper : *As I think it no disgrace, to dissent from the opinion of any Writer, of how great name or antiquity soever ; so I shall without much reluctance recede even from my own, if any one shall shew me better reasons for another ; tho' the person that offers them, should be ever so mean and illiterate* *. This sober and sedate man had unquestionably as great a regard to authority, especially that of the best ancients, as any man in his time. Nor was any man perhaps better versed in them than he. Yet it is evident from this, as well as from many other passages in his writings, that he did not pay an implicit regard to any of them ; knowing they were but men, and consequently fallible, as well as others. For tho' he arrogated nothing to his own judgment, and allowed every other person his liberty in judging ; yet he did not think it became him, or any other man of reason, to yield too great a deference to any human authority, however dignified or distinguished, or however venerated and followed by any number of men. But what seems still more amiable in him, he was always open to conviction, always ready to receive information, and to be directed to what should appear to be right, however different from his present sentiment. He considered himself as lia-

* *Annot. in 1 Cor. VII. p. 491. ed. Froben. 1555,*

ble to mistakes, like the rest of his fellow-creatures * ; and was therefore free to alter his judgment, when better reasons should be offered. He thought it no shame to do this. Nor *is* it really any. But it is a great and a real shame not to do it, when we perceive we are in the wrong, and when clearer and better light breaks in upon us. To continue still in our old opinions, is then a fault, is then a *heterodoxy* ; being a heterodoxy from ourselves : And a greater or worse heterodoxy than this there cannot be : It amounts even to *heresy*, in the truest sense of the word. For it renders a person condemned in his own breast ; as adhering obstinately to what he either knows, or has just reason to believe, to be wrong ; and shutting his eyes wilfully against what, if he would but vouchsafe to open them, he could not but perceive to be right.

The true, the just, and the fair way, is to proceed uniformly from time to time, according to the best light that God shall give us ; to be attached to no party, to preclude no instruction, tho' it should come from the simplest and meanest of men ; *etiamsi sit idiota qui doceat*. We should have our ears open to reason, whenever, and by whomsoever it is offered. For reason is in itself the same, whoever offers it. Nor does the quality of the person in the least diminish from its strength, or from our obligation to attend to it. It is truth we are to regard, and not the person. And our reason is given us to discern truth ; at least to inquire after it, and find it if we can. And when we find, we should embrace and obey it.

There is not, upon the whole, a more amiable disposition, or one that more becomes an honest

* *Homines sumus* (speaking of himself in this light,) & *humani nihil alienum à nobis esse ducimus*. Præfat. supr. citat.

man, and a true Christian, than a love of truth, and a readiness to receive it: Nor could any one have better expressed, or shewn greater evidence of this disposition, than *Erasmus* has done. His example therefore deserves to be considered; and if considered with such attention as to produce the same ingenuity in others, which appeared in him; the world, I will venture to say, will be much happier than it is, and that soon. For either there will be fewer debates among men, than there are at present; or they will at least be managed with much better temper, than they are commonly observed to be. *Desiderius.*

N U M B. II.

Ut litigia in rebus Sacris aut prorsus conflescant, aut ad Evangelii propagationem, ad florentem Ecclesiæ conditionem, ad totius orbis bonum, & Dei gloriam, ringentibus frustra ingeniis rixosis, pacatiora evadant omnia. Th. Hayne de pace ecclesiasticâ.

I HAVE long and often reflected with concern upon the various controversies about religion. They appear to me to be all of them hurtful, unless they were managed with more decency, and better temper. My Lord *Bacon* observes, in one of his essays, that controversies upon this subject, were unknown among the *Heathens*. Would to God they had never been known among *Christians*! Can Christians justify a practice which their religion condemns, and the Heathens were strangers to? Will not the latter rise up in judgment against the former, if this be fact? His Lordship indeed speaks chiefly of disputes concerning the ceremonies of religion. But this does not mend the matter. For what is it that Christians have made a greater stir

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about,

about, than such ceremonies? Have they not often contended about them, even to the destruction of all the vital parts of their religion; and do they not continue to do so to this day?—It really grieves a serious, sober, and considerate mind, to think of these contentions; and more to think of the *manner* in which they are carried on. Discussions upon any subject might undoubtedly be managed with sufficient decency, and with all imaginable in-offensiveness, if men thought fit, and if they sought only for Truth: Which, after all, is not so very difficult to be found, if they seek it with an honest and impartial mind. But alas! (one does not well know how they order it) prejudice and spleen seem to prevail more in mens breasts, than real religion, and the love of truth. Carried on, I suppose, with an impetuous eagerness for dispute, they insensibly lose both, and, what is worse, seem content to lose them. Unhappy mortals! Little do they know the value of these; and little do they consider the insignificancy of many of those other points, about which they so often and so earnestly contend. Surely they have not yet learnt of Him who was *meek and lowly in heart*, to refrain their spirits after his example; and his great command of *loving one another* seems to be still *new* to them. I am afraid it will continue to be new and unknown to many, unto the world's end.

I own I am displeased with all these trifling alterations among Christians; who when in understanding and behaviour they ought to be Men, too often shew themselves, by their little quarrels, to be still children in both. One would reasonably expect that those who profess to be taught by so divine a Master, would pay a greater regard to his precepts and example; and, for the honour of his religion, would strive to adorn it by union, rather than disgrace,

grace it by contention. But you see it is otherwise ; and every serious Christian laments it, whilst the enemies of religion rejoice at it, and too easily find and improve an advantage, which they so diligently seek, in every ill-conducted debate between the disciples of peace.

Well, tho' I am not a little offended, I will refrain myself, if I can, and speak a word or two in a calmer manner ; descending to a particular subject.—I was looking, the other day, into a piece, lately published, which is like, if I mistake not, to occasion some controversy. How do you think I read it ? Having nothing, that I know of, to bias me, and desiring only to learn the truth, I sat myself down with an equal mind to search after it. I do not yet certainly know, whether I have found it ; nor am I anxious. It is enough, for me that I sincerely seek it ; ever willing to embrace it, wherever I can discern it. I could not but think, as I was going along, how much happier I was in my perusal of this treatise, than those, who perused it with a view of *answering* it. They, to be sure, were incessantly upon the watch ; they sought where they might lay hold of the author : *I* sought for nothing, but to know whether he spake truth and sense ; and therefore freely permitted my judgment, such as it is, to examine with fairness and candor, whatever he attempted to prove. For I seriously considered, and was fully satisfied, that truth must and will have its way, and indeed ought to have it, whether we are willing or no. I therefore made it my business, in examining the subject, to minute down the arguments, that occurred to me, on both sides of the question ; which I intend to consider at my leisure, and from thence to form my judgment as well as I can of the whole, without partiality to either side. Had I been a dabler in controversies,

and set against this book before I saw it, and therefore resolved at all adventures to answer it, I should have lost all the pleasure, which I have found in perusing it; I mean the pleasure of searching after truth. My mind would have been continually upon the hurry, if not also upon the fret; and I should not have had a moment's delight in the employ, unless where I chanced to find my author tripping, and therefore like to give me the unmanly pleasure of insulting him.—Thus it is, I fear, with most writers of controversy, being resolved to *answer* before they *hear*; and when they hear, not being able to *judge*: For *l'esprit de dispute gaste beaucoup l'esprit*; and 'prejudice, with too many, 'predetermines a cause, before it comes to a fair 'hearing.' *O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united!*

When the late great controversy with Mr. Warburton was on foot, I was of the same free and even turn of mind. I was for hearing the man out. But the world would not allow him that small favour: And so they and I are disappointed of his discoveries. Surely had so great a genius been permitted, he might have struck out some new lights, that might have been of considerable service to religion; even tho' he should have happened, as men of such extraordinary talents sometimes do, to deviate into what he calls the *province of paradox*. And suppose he had; would there have been any great hurt, so long as he sought the truth, and endeavoured to display it, tho' he might happen to miss of it? Inquiry should be left free for all men; and persons of large minds have no fear about the consequences of finding truth, by whomsoever it can be discovered. It is almost unavoidable but when men of great abilities are searching for it, they will accidentally strike out into some paradox,
and

and what may have no sufficient foundation. But what then? It is better, that the search should be made, tho' the discoveries consequent upon it should be attended with some singularities, and what cannot so readily be acquiesced in *. One truth of importance found will make ample amends for twenty lesser errors. For these will not pass with men of judgment; and cannot do half so much harm, as the discouraging of free inquiry does; which is a means to remove them. And therefore had that learned man been suffered to pursue his scheme, without throwing so many obstacles in his way at his first setting out; it is not improbable but by this time we should have been delighted with several very important discoveries, tho' blended perhaps with some notions peculiar to the author, and of less consequence to the world upon the whole. But then, supposing this, would it not have been easy for good minds to have forgiven him, in consideration of greater services; and would it not have been equally easy for our learning to have pointed out his mistakes, and for our judgment to have corrected them? But we were impatient, and we see the effect of such immature eagerness to enter

* The judicious Mr. Mede rightly observes, that liberty of examination and conjecture is absolutely necessary in order to make any great and useful discoveries. Nay, he carries the matter so far as to say, that unless we are allowed not only to think with freedom, but even to err with impunity in some things, we shall never be able to discover truth to any valuable purpose, or to promote its progress and success in the world: *Illud pro certo habens, nisi in hisce talibus liberius paulo sentiendi imò & errandi venia concedatur, ad profunda illa & latentia Veritatis adyta viam nunquam patefactum iri.* And the great Lord Bacon, as I remember, doth somewhere propose, that generous tho' unsuccessful attempts to discover any useful and important truths, should be publicly rewarded. So far was this wise man from discouraging such attempts, tho' they should be attended with some errors, and display some new sentiments not to be found in any creed.

the lists with a man of such distinguished abilities, before he could speak his mind. A treatment this, which many other extraordinary persons have met with, when they have attempted to do service to the Christian Cause in a way, that was not common; and to rescue this religion from its shackles, by arguments more suitable to its principles, than those, which had been a means of enslaving it. Thus (as has been rightly observed by a sincere Friend to this Religion and this Writer) *some of the best Defenders of Christianity, down from Origen, &c. have been unkindly used and traduced by injudicious Christians, for a harder epithet shall not be given to them.*

For my own part, I can truly say this of myself, that I am against hindring any man from searching, and from endeavouring to do service to religion, in any good way, tho' he should proceed upon a plan, that I could not altogether approve of: that I am for allowing free and fair inquiry in all cases; that in all my life I have been desirous to find truth myself, and to see it discovered by others; and that to the last day of it, I hope to be of the same ingenuous and unprejudiced disposition. Truth alone is honourable; and truth alone can give content and peace. This only can do service to religion; and if we hope to do it service by any other measures, we defeat its ends, and blast our endeavours.

D.

NUMB.

N U M B. III.

Oderat rixas & jurgia, præsertim inter eruditos; ac turpe esse dicebat viros indubitatè doctos caninâ rabie famam vicissim suam rodere ac lacerare scriptis trucibus, tanquam vilissimos de plebe cerdones in angiporis sese luto ac stercore conspurcantes. Rigaltius in vit. Puteani.

— I WAS so much pleased with what you told me had been lately agreed upon amongst you, in reference to the subject we discoursed upon, that I resolved to take the first opportunity to communicate my further observations: Which may, I flatter myself, be of some little service to help forward the good design, and, if possible, to shame out of the world that bitter and malignant spirit, which is so common in controversial writers, but is at the same time so prejudicial to the cause of truth, and to the honour and advancement of the Christian religion.

My observations, such as they are, shall be formed upon a review of some past controversies, and the sentiments of some wise and good men in relation to the manner of handling them. I propose no more in this Letter, than to furnish you with a few materials: Which you may either incorporate into your scheme, or lay aside, as you shall think proper.

I could heartily wish, that the writers of controversy would consider *one* pattern at least, which is laid before them in the New Testament. *Michael, the Archangel, when contending with the devil about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but [only] said, The Lord rebuke thee.* Patience and wisdom becoming the excellence of an

Angel! Let us reflect a little upon this. An Archangel, disputing with an infernal Spirit, would not presume to calumniate, or use any bitter and reproachful words. How is the scene changed! What difference has been shewn since, in the management of disputes! An Archangel *durst not bring a railing accusation*: But a Christian dares, and will do it. The former *durst not* do it, even in combating with the devil, the grand *accuser of the brethren*: But the latter adventures upon it boldly, and without the least remorse or shame, even in disputing with his brethren, *his own Mother's sons*. Further: What was the dispute about? It was about *the body of Moses*. Have we not had the most fiery, and even the most bloody disputes among Christians, about *the body of Christ*? I should be almost tempted to think, that the Apostle, foreseeing those future disputes, might throw in this instance as a caveat against them. But alas (supposing he did) how few have attended to it, or cared any thing about it, in comparison of the gratifying of their angry passions! Mr. Nelson makes a just observation upon this piece of history. The conduct of the Archangel, in his contest with Satan, *should teach all men, but especially those, who are as Angels of God in the Church, to be ashamed and afraid, particularly in controversies about religion, to use railing and injurious reflections; since such opprobrious language neither becomes the nature of their office, nor their character as Christians*. This observation coming from a Gentleman of the Laity (who himself never offended in this instance, in any of his writings) comes the more home to the Gentlemen of the Clergy; and should therefore, I think, be the more regarded by them. To them, as I take it, is that Apostolical monition more immediately directed; *The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient;*

patient ; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, &c. copying herein the example of their blessed Master, who *did not strive, nor cry, neither did any man bear his voice in the streets* (being mild, gentle, quiet, and averse to all contention and ostentation :) *A bruised reed did he not break, and smoking flax did he not quench, &c.* Therefore are his Ministers peculiarly styled *the servants of the Lord*, as having him for their pattern, who left to *them* more especially this amiable example of peaceableness and forbearance, that they should *follow his steps*. And indeed to all Christians is given this precept (which they are carefully to observe, even when they have to do with unbelieving cavillers ;) *Be ready always to give an answer to every man, that asketh you a reason of the hope, that is in you, with meekness and fear*, not with forwardness and petulance, and with an itch of disputing. The Apostle exhorts the *man of God* to be upon his guard against this, to avoid controversies and disputes, as things of ill tendency, knowing that such contentious wranglings do but *engender strife*. And it very well merits our observation, that in his two letters to *Timothy*, and in that directed to *Titus*, he inculcates this precept no less than five times, to engage these *servants of God*, to decline questions and disputes (which tend little to edification in faith and holiness) and to apply their main care to that, which is practical and useful, as being of far more importance in itself, and more becoming their character as Evangelists. *Do the work of an Evangelist* : Which surely is not to proclaim war but peace, and endeavour to promote it amongst all Christians ; not to inveigh, provoke and irritate, but by mild and gentle language, proceeding from a holy disposition of the soul, and sincere affection of the heart, to soften mens passions, and blunt the edge of their

resentment ; not to vilify, condemn, and overbear,
 but by close reasoning, and hard arguments, to
 endeavour to inform mens understanding, and con-
 vince their judgment. And this seems the more
 reasonable and prudent upon *this* account ; because
 (as a good man rightly observes) ‘ No one, that is
 ‘ in an error, thinks that he is so : And therefore,
 ‘ says he, if we go about by violence to rend mens
 ‘ opinions from them, they will but hold them so
 ‘ much the faster : but if we have but so much pa-
 ‘ tience and charity, as to unrip their errors by
 ‘ degrees, they will at last fall in pieces of them-
 ‘ selves.— We are therefore with great lenity and
 ‘ meekness to instruct the erroneous, even when
 ‘ they oppose the truth ; who, if they will not bear
 ‘ gentle teaching, will much less yield to sharp in-
 ‘ vectives, or provoking disputes. Till they can
 ‘ be brought, by consideration and reason, to be
 ‘ agents in recovering themselves, no teaching or
 ‘ disputing will recover them.’ *The spirit of meek-*
ness alone is calculated to do this. The meek will
 God guide in judgment, *the meek shall understand his*
ways, and be able to teach them unto others. *Seek*
righteousness, seek meekness. Follow after righteous-
ness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. I
beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.
Put on (as the elect of God) kindness, humbleness of
mind, meekness, long-suffering ; forbearing one another,
and forgiving one another. With all lowliness and
meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another
in love ; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit
in the bond of peace. To speak evil of no man ; to be
no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all
men. Be at peace among yourselves ; be patient to-
wards all men. That ye may increase and abound in
love one towards another, and towards all men. Be
cloathed

cloathed with humility. The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price.

These are plainly the principles, and this is undeniably the spirit and temper of the *Gospel*. But how sadly are we fallen from these noble principles, and this lovely temper and spirit! It grieves me to recollect the numerous instances of the contrary, both in former and later times. But this I have chosen to make a part of my melancholy theme; hoping thereby to put Christians upon reflecting, and growing wiser and better.

How early did the evil spirit of contention begin to make its way into the Church! Even in the days of the Apostles, as I gather from some of their writings. And what tumults and disturbances it raised therein afterwards, appears but too flagrantly in succeeding histories. It would make one's heart ache, and almost dissolve with grief, to read the late history of the *Lives of the Popes*. And yet the facts are so solidly proved, as to be past all dispute. It is amazing to think, that the purest and best religion could be so abused; a religion, which, as a heathen writer confesses (such is the force of truth) breathes nothing but love, and gentleness, and justice. *Nil nisi justum suadet et lenè*. These are the words of *Marcellinus* *. How greatly then was it perverted, to be made a bone of contention, and hatred, and injustice! This arose from no other principle, but a devilish, selfish, worldly spirit, and *love of pre-eminence* and earthly power. Which infatuated men so far, as to usurp an authority over the faith of their brethren, and make them adopt heathenish rites into the worship of Christians. Their contentions were often about trifles; about days, and months, and years; about mint, and anise, and cummin; neglecting the

* *Lib. 22.*

weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, faith, and the love of God and of men. These things, which they ought principally to have done, they very silently and contentedly passed over, paying no regard to them, and making them give way to their politic schemes and worldly interests. And when they brought matters of faith upon the stage, how wofully did they pervert them; how did they cloath them in rags of their own invention, instead of that raiment of exquisite needle-work (above all human art and contrivance) which God had prepared, and his Son had exhibited, in decorations of wrought gold! They had their cautions, and distinctions, and sub-distinctions, one after another, *ad infinitum*; and the true, plain, simple Christian faith, and rules of good life, were intirely lost from among men. This was the fatal turn: some remains of which continue to this day, and will not soon or easily be obliterated.

In the dark ages succeeding (every age growing darker and darker, by means of prevailing tyranny, and arbitrary sway) superstition, idolatry, and profaneness, seemed to cover the face of the earth. Faith was no where to be found: True religion was gone: Morals were disregarded: Debates every where prevailed: The *Scotists*, the *Thomists*, the *Ockhamists*, and the whole infatuated herd of their auxiliaries, divided the world between them *.

When

* *His temporibus surrexit Petrus Lombardus magister sententiarum. Hujus verò pulli planè Martii minutiis suis & quæstionibus curiosioribus theologiam veram in scholasticas tricas, & rixas minus necessarias comminuebant, & magnâ ex parte enervabant. Deinde surrexerunt Ioannes Scotus & Thomas Aquinas: — Pòst, novæ Scotistarum & Thomistarum familiæ & sectæ (magno Ecclesiæ malo) exortæ sunt: qui ad pugnas paratissimi, & in igne contentionum & disputationum immorientes, lucem sacrarum Scripturarum obscurarunt, &c. A primis temporibus sectatorum Lombardi, Scoti & Aquinatis, in hunc diem, patres filii, professores*

When the light of the reformation (after a long and dismal night) broke in at last upon that thick darkness of ignorance and error, we still find, to our sorrow, that the old leaven of malice and wickedness, debate and contention, did not cease. The purer rays of the Gospel did not dissipate all the mist, nor remove the riveted animosity from mens hearts. There was a long and violent struggle between the children of light, and the children of darkness : And the papalians and reformers were inveterate against each other, almost to a degree of madness. Nay the reformers (which I am sorry to say) were many of them as inveterate against one another, as they were all of them resolute against the Romanists. So little had true religion affected and reformed the hearts of those, that espoused it, tho' otherwise convinced of its importance, and ready to seal the testimony of it with their blood. What a strange answer was that, which one of the contending parties gave to the Elector *Palatine's* Chaplain, exhorting them to peace and union, notwithstanding their different sentiments upon some passages of scripture ? *No, said they, it is impossible to be at peace and friendship with such men. As for political friendship, we never refused it ; but as for theological, we will never grant it.* As if theology was intended to destroy, rather than promote friendship and peace ; and as if peace in the Church was of a different nature from peace in the civil society. Good God ! what distinctions are these ? The bitter taunts and ill manners, that were used in many controversies, make them very disagreeable to a good

seffores discipulis, tanquam ex traduce, contentiones alii aliis in manus tradiderunt. — Ita ut sint gallis in theatrum productis simillimi, qui, cum pugne nulla subfit causa, tamen ad ultimum vite spiritum depugnant ; — minutulas controversias grandi & indefesso molimine elaborantes, &c. Pax in terrâ, c. 7. & 12.

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mind on re-examining them. Viliifying and reproachful language was the bane of such controversies; which otherwise might have been managed, not only without offence, but with great advantage to the cause of truth. The calling of names was become habitual, and never scrupled. Some of our men (whether *Friib*, *Tindal*, or *Jay*,) attacking Sir *Thomas More*, upon the subject of transubstantiation, complimented him with the title of *Mayster Mocke*. That great and wise man, tho' bred a Courtier, condescended to *return* the compliment in titles equally engaging; *Mayster Maske*, and *Mayster Mummer* *. In the famous controversy between Dr. *Cranmer* Archbishop of *Canterbury*, and Dr. *Gardiner* Bishop of *Winchester*, where one would have least expected to have found any personal reflections and scurrilities on either side, we find but too much of this latter sort on some occasions, especially in *Gardiner's* declamations, and sometimes even in the answers of the good Archbishop, who fails not to be even with his adversary in charges of *lying*, &c. Which tho' no more than true in fact, as applied to *Gardiner*, might have been better forborne, in a controversy between men of such stations, and in an affair, wherein religion was concerned. At other times he styles him an *ignorant Lawyer*, being a Civilian. And in one place, if I remember right, he speaks of *Dogges*; alluding, I suppose, to the snarling disposition of some of the opposers of a reformation. Which reminds me of the controversy some years before between *Horman* and *Whittington*. What offence this latter had given, I cannot say: Only I find, that he was *rude*, and bit pretty close, where he fastned his teeth. Which ex-

* *Answer to the peysoned book whych a nameles heretique hath named, The Supper of the Lorde.*

cited and envenomed about half a dozen adversaries. Therefore Dr. *Horman*, a Divine, and Vice-Provost of *Eton*, being one of them, and willing to shew him a shrewd turn, exposes him, in the frontispiece to his *Apologeticon*, as a *Bear*, baited by six *Dogs*, &c. forgetting perhaps, that he made Himself one of them. Such low wit, and loathsome incivilities, were common in that age, and were so far from giving disgust, that they were in high repute; and that man gave most delight, who gave most offence. For the generality of readers were delighted, where the more judicious were offended.

—Nor were such buffooneries vented only from the press, but also from the pulpit. You have an uncommon instance in *Strype*, which I care not to give you in words at length. And yet those words (which you may see, *Annals*, vol. 2. 1580.) were actually delivered in the Cathedral Church at *Chichester*, by one Dignitary against another; the latter no mean man then, and sometime after a Bishop. ‘He could not contain his reproaches of the Doctor privately (says my author) but most rudely aspersed him openly in that Church, in most indecent language, no way befitting the mouth of a Preacher in so public a place; betraying his own malice, and envy, and pride, and conceit of himself.’—*Strype* indeed says, after having given us those most provoking words, *There is no way of bringing this Preacher off, and excusing his extravagant expressions, but by saying, as surely he was, that in an over-weening conceit of himself, he was disturbed in his mind.* Perhaps not much more so, than many others of his time, and since. Many *controversial writers* have shewn themselves to be little better than *Bedlamites*,—disturbed in their minds. However, they created diversion: they made the public merry and happy, tho’ at the expence of their own understanding,

standing, as well as of religion and good manners. Neglecting or disregarding their own proper business (we may here apply the words of *Polybius*) and launching out into extravagances and things foreign to their office, they exposed their folly, as upon a stage, to the public ridicule — *ἰνὰ τὴν κοινὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων γέλοιον.*

And long after this (even for many years after) this continued to be the humor of the times, and the grand entertainment of the public. In the unhappy days of our civil disturbances, two *Doctors in Divinity* (both famed for their adherence to the royal cause, and both equally sufferers on the account of it) had a very undoctory combat. One being attacked by the other, as no true friend to the King, nor to the Church, (they were perhaps both of them too much friends to King *Pope*, and to *his* Church) sets him forth to the public view, in all the odious characters his brain could invent, or his pen delineate. *The fellow ; the fellow without a name ; this Nicholas-Nemo ; this Sir Jarvis Simple ; this upstart ; this fellow, who hath neither degree, name, nor dignity (tho', in truth, he had all the three, and some of the highest of each ;) this cuckow ; this wasp ; this momus ; this fellow in a fool's coat, with his advertisement ; such a jack-an-ape ; thou black and sullen spirit, that carpest at my writings, &c.* — This same black and sullen spirit (as he is here called) carping at the writings of a Mitred Head, who, by opposing some innovating practices in the Church, had greatly displeased him and his party, treats his Lordship with very rough compliments, and shews no more regard to his high dignity, than he usually did, in controversy, to persons of inferior stations. I shall not concern myself with the *cause*, that they debated, but give you some specimens of the *civilities* they bestowed upon one another, in the course of debating

bating it. This reverend Gentleman (dedicating his book to the King) calls his right reverend Superior, *Non-nemo; a most confident Ignaro; an idle dreamer; a libeller; the greatest libeller, the veriest railer, the most notorious falsifier; a ready master at railing; full of all false dealing; one that is perfect in the arts of railing, falsifying, and deceiving; a lewd practicer, who cares not if the Church were in a combustion, so he may warm his hands by the flame thereof; he and others of that crew.*—And addressing the Bishop personally; *Speak man: Your doughty Self: So great a Clerk: Most learnedly resolved! If you were a scholar* [which he was well known to be; but in the heat of controversy it would not be allowed] *you would have been ashamed to write this divinity: Never did any wretched cause meet a fitter advocate: Such a dull, drowsy disputant* [who nevertheless was a man of great vivacity] *did never undertake so great an argument, &c.* If you would see more of this sort of compliments, you may cast your eye below *. The Prelate also (with just con-

* Speaking of the Bishop's book, &c. *a libel with a witness; a venomous discourse; counterfeit stuff most of it, and wrought with so much fraud and falshood, that there is hardly one true stitch in all the work;—palpable, gross, extreme falshood of the man; such and so many impostures of all sorts were never thrust upon the world in so small a volume. —Scurrilous and full of folly, scandalous and full of faction. A lie; a factious figment.* And to the Prelate himself; *Your word is not worth the taking: A trick of yours; one of those many tricks you have played so often. Your master-piece of ignorance; not such another to be found in all the country. As you have most ignorantly set it down. Such is your gross ignorance.* Again: *With an unparalleled kind of impudence. In my life I never knew equal impudence. With a ridiculous confidence. Good store of confident ignorance, and gross falsifications. He comes into the field with no other weapons than insolent ignorance and falshood, &c.* Amazing all this! The end was dismal. In these and many other disputants of the times, was sadly, and soon after, verified that observation of the Poet,

—*Cadunt subito per mutua vulnera fratres!*

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cern be it spoken) greatly exceeded the bounds of Christian moderation in this contest. Whatever titles might be due to his adversary, would they not have been better forborne in such a dispute as this? The adversary hath taken care to exhibit most of them in one view; to which I shall take the liberty to add some, that he hath omitted. *This fellow, this poor fellow; this domineering fellow; poor Doctor; railing Doctor; doughty Doctor; blinking Doctor; our noble Doctor; Bishop would be;* [which by the way, he never was, even after the restoration:] *scribler; wrangler; common barreter; scurrilous railer; railing Philistin; this animal pugnacissimum; a firebrand; a most ridiculous creature for his reasoning; a most injudicious and trifling novice* [then about six or seven and thirty;] *this mushroom; this squeamish gentleman; this false fingered gentleman; this impostor; braggard; whiffler; a thing that cannot blush; my Don Nosotros; haughty, impudent companion; mountebank; fawning sycophant; base sycophant; a Divine of whims and singularity; &c.* [Which last character might be too well deserved.] It is a disgrace to Divinity, that its Professors should use such *Billingsgate*, and discover to the world, that they had such black venom working in their hearts:

—*Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ!*

But this, it seems, was the common distemper of those times, as we learn from Bishop Hall; who being himself of so gracious a spirit, deserved to live in far better. ‘In *these* times, says he, it is ‘rare to find any writer, whose ink is not tempered ‘with gall and vinegar; any speaker, whose mouth ‘is not a quiver of sharp and bitter words.’ Those above cited were certainly as sharp and bitter, but withal as mean and despicable, as any that could well

well come from a foul mouth, or a prostitute pen. You will do me the justice to believe, that I produce them with no other view, than to render such a way of writing odious and contemptible; as in every sober man's judgment it deserves to be.

It is not my intent, nor would I be so disagreeably employed, as to muster up a whole series of unmannerly controversies, in every period of time. I pass by many. I touch only upon a few, such as occur to my memory, and may be proper to my purpose. I may mention some later instances. Bishop *Parker*, tho' bred a Puritan, proved afterwards inveterate against that set of men. He had a smart contest with *Marvel* (a Lay-Gentleman of shrewd wit and sense) who espoused the cause of the non-conformists. Here were two combatants met, of a keen, satyrical turn; who would neither of them give way to the other, but resolved each of them to maintain his point, at the expence of every thing that was kind and candid. For they strove with all the virulent wit, that each of them was master of (and they had both of them a more than ordinary share of it) to foil each other; and did so belabour one another, so cut, and hack, and lash, and vilify, that one part of the public was as much amazed, as the other was entertained, with such hostilities on both sides. They are now each of them gone to their long home, and I would chuse to say no more about them. One thing occurs to me, which I would briefly take notice of. Dr. *Nichols* (somewhere in his Apology) says, that Bishop *Parker* is scarce notable for any thing, besides smart satyrical expressions. He might probably mean, in his controversies with dissenters; where he may well be allowed to have verified this character. But I cannot allow, that he deserves it, in all his writings. His *Demonstration of the divine authority of the law of nature, and*
D of

of the Christian religion, (a masterly performance) is a just exception.

The *trinitarian* controversy, which came on not long after, was managed by some in a manner, that was extremely unbecoming so great a subject. What unhappy extremes did those two dignified Divines run into, *Sherlock* and *South*! the one charging the other with *tritbeism*, and he him again with *Sabelianism*, &c. But more inexcusable still were the witty satyrs of two such grave men upon each other, in the handling of so serious an argument. The Dean of *St. Paul's* could not refrain from comparing the Prebendary of *Westminster* to *Don Quixot*. The Prebendary, in return, very calmly observes, that he knew of no reason, that Mr. *Dean* had to liken him to that romantic hero, but because he had once in his life fought with a *windmill*. The extraordinary conduct of these great men, thus exposing religion and one another, drew from a serious and good man (styling himself a *melancholy stander-by*,) 'An earnest and compassionate suit for forbearance,' addressed to these and some other learned Controversitists, upon that weighty subject. This serious and friendly suitor was no less than a Bishop *, tho' he was not then commonly known to be the Man. But it fared with him, as with many other benevolent interposers, that would fain make peace between litigants. One of the parties immediately rose up in arms against him, and warned him to stand off, instead of standing by, treating him with a severity and tartness upon this occasion, which was by no means due to so great a character. And when the good Prelate replied, the other resolving to have the last word, soon convinced him, that it was his wiser way to desist; which he accordingly did, with the

* Dr. *Wettenhall*, Bishop of *Cork*.

meekness and prudence that became him.—The other unseemly debates, that were kept glowing for many years upon this awful thesis, I willingly pass over, wishing they had never subsisted, or were buried in lasting oblivion. Dean *Prideaux*, a man of peace, so sadly lamented them, and other unseasonable controversies of the times, that observing their fatal tendency, and foreseeing their dismal consequences, he drew up a learned treatise, shewing the dire effects of such debates; which ended in the total overthrow of the once flourishing Churches of the East. You will see with concern what he says upon this occasion, in his introduction to the *Life of Mohammed*.

The controversy of the learned Divines in *Convocation* assembled, about rights and privileges peculiarly their own, and best known to themselves, should be left to *die* with that venerable assembly, that raised it, and ended with it. The inveterate odium against the incomparable Bishop of *Salisbury*, and the many unworthy reflections cast upon his exalted character, being forgiven by himself, will be forgotten or disregarded by posterity. The rough and unhandsome treatment of the mild and gentle Bishop *Fleetwood* raises an amazement in ingenuous minds, that ends in a generous indignation. And the many and very great indignities, which another Bishop sustained, whilst he was maintaining the cause of liberty, are so fresh in memory, that they need not be mentioned by me, and are, I dare say, by this time reflected upon with shame by several of his adversaries. By himself, I make no doubt, they are reflected upon as an accession to his deserved praise.

You will, I know, excuse my forbearing to proceed any further upon these invidious topics. I have perhaps tired you too much upon so disagreeable a

subject. But my view and design have been intimated to you before. And now I turn to entertain you briefly with the reflections made by some learned men, upon the improper management of controversy, and the pernicious effects of such management. — ‘ I wish (says Bishop *Kennet*) that the excellent parts of many writers were not spent upon frivolous arguments, where by subtleties and cavils, and controverting quibbles, they serve only to weaken Christianity, and (what otherwise were pardonable) to expose one another *.’ — ‘ To see with what bitterness and rancor of spirit the disputers of this world engage themselves in the controversies of religion; with what scurrility and reflections they charge their arguments; with what loads of calumny and reproach, implacable hatred, and unchristian heats, they pursue those, who differ from them, and oppose their sentiments; one would think it was not *truth*, but devilish revenge and popular applause they sought after; and that it mattered not how much the honor of religion suffered, provided they could but secure their own, and gratify their passions †.’ These words are really very affecting, and untowardly disputants may see herein the true picture of their mind and practice, as well as the springs and motives of their ill-conducted zeal: a zeal not truly Christian, whatever they may think; and what they can by no means justify, but will reflect upon with shame and concern, at the great day of account, when they shall appear before that mild and merciful Judge, who by his precepts and practice had taught them better things. Surely, as the great Lord *Bacon* somewhere observes, ‘ a character of *Love* is more proper for debates about matters of religion, than

* Pref. to *parochial antiquities*.

† *Needham's* considerations on Church-divisions, p. 8.

‘ that of *Zeal*,’ especially such a zeal, as is here re-
prehended, being rather a gratifying of passion, than
acting for the honor of religion, or having any true
concern for its advancement. No, that is com-
monly the least and the last regarded, tho’ often-
times the zeal, that is exerted, especially if it be vio-
lent, is pretended to be upon the account of it.
‘ There is no hostility (says the *Sieur Montaigne*)
accounted so excellent, as that, which is cloked with
the pretence of the *Christian Religion*. Our *zeal*
performs wonders, when it seconds our *inclinations*
to hatred, &c.’ I cannot forbear adding those other
words of the same observing Man, which I else-
where meet with in his miscellanies. ‘ The *disputes*,
which are managed with *heat* and *passion* [and most
are managed with too much of both] ought to be
forbidden [by Law] as well as the other crimes of
the tongue [or pen.] We first quarrel with mens
reason, and then with the *persons*. We only learn
to dispute, that we may *contradict*; and while every
one contradicts another, and is contradicted by him
again, it often falls out, that all the fruit of the dis-
pute is to *lose and destroy the truth*.’ Indeed the
itch of disputing, so common in the world, even in
the Christian part of it, makes us lose and destroy
both the truth, and the temper of Christianity; a
temper so necessary in order to discern its truth, and
be charmed with its excellence; — a meek, an
humble, and a candid temper; a temper, which the
Saviour of the world so absolutely requires of his
followers. Can a man be a true Christian without
it? Can he maintain either the truth or the honor of
his religion, whilst he is a stranger to this temper?
Pray give me leave to ask, upon this important oc-
casion; should we not first *study* our religion, and
attain the *temper* of it, before we begin to *dispute*
about it? Should we not become *Christians*, before

we become *Disputants*? Shall we be able, with good grace and success, to defend the *truth* of our religion, without having its *temper*? And will the great Author of it reward us for what we do, tho' we do it, as we may pretend, for the honor of his name, and may flatter ourselves, that we are doing him service? Alas, alas! I am concerned for the disputes of men, about what they either do not understand, or care not to consider. The thought is really mortifying, and I will leave it. Why should I trouble you with more reflections of this kind? I go on therefore as I intended, desiring to give you pleasure, and not pain.

I scarce remember to have met with any thing more affecting and more weighty upon this subject, than the words of that great Man, Archbishop *Tillotson*, composing his thoughts toward the latter part of his life, to the promoting of *practical Christianity*, and taking his leave of controversy: Which tho' his concern for truth made him sometimes to undertake, his great soul never delighted in. His excellent sense, and uncommon knowledge of human nature, confirmed by long and attentive observation, make his sentiments more valuable, and more deserving of regard, than what can be offered by inferior writers. How wisely and how movingly doth he speak, at a time when, as he intimates, *the infirmities of age were coming fast upon him*, and he had now a nearer prospect of eternity, and its great concerns! 'Being, I hope, for the remainder
' of my life, released from that irksome and unplea-
' sant work of controversy and wrangling about re-
' ligion, I shall now turn my thoughts to something
' more agreeable to my temper, and of a more di-
' rect and immediate tendency to the promoting of
' true religion, to the happiness of human Society,
' and the reformation of the world. I have no in-

* tention to reflect upon any, that stand up in defence
 * of the truth, and contend earnestly for it, endea-
 * vouring in the spirit of meekness to reclaim those
 * that are in error. For I doubt not but a very
 * good man may upon several occasions be almost
 * unavoidably engaged in controversies of religion ;
 * and if he have a head clear and cool enough, so
 * as to be master of his own notions and temper in
 * that hot kind of service, he may therein do con-
 * siderable advantage to the truth : though a man,
 * that hath once drawn blood in controversy, as
 * Mr. *Mede* expresseth it, is seldom known ever per-
 * fectly to recover his own good temper afterwards.
 * For this reason a good man should not be very
 * willing, when his Lord comes, to be found so
 * doing, and as it were beating his fellow Servants :
 * And all controversy, as it is usually managed, is
 * little better. A good man would be loth to be
 * taken out of the world reeking hot from a sharp
 * contention with a perverse adversary ; and not a
 * little out of countenance, to find himself in this
 * temper translated into the calm and peaceable Re-
 * gions of the Blessed, where nothing but perfect
 * charity and good will reign for ever.' These
 words, as the writer of his Life rightly observes,
 are spoken in the tenderness of a fatherly and pri-
 mitive spirit, and breathe the very soul of that in-
 comparable man.

We find by the history of this excellent person,
 that he was always a *son of peace*. The law of kind-
 ness was in his tongue, and in his heart dwelt bene-
 volence and love. ' He never was of an imperious
 humour, but had from his youngest years that sweet-
 ness of temper, which he ever after retained ; and
 the modest, good-natured, affable man, continued
 to be his character in his highest elevation. He had
 (we are told by one of his most intimate friends) a

sweetness and gentleness in him, that seemed rather to lean to excess ; which, I suppose, is spoken with a view to the extraordinary provocations he met with. He did all the good services in his power to all, without ever once doing an ill office, or a hard thing to any one person. His candor and moderation were so great towards those, who differed from him, whether in points of a civil or religious nature, that he did not treat them with contempt and hatred, the common practice of men of lower and less generous minds, but made just allowances for their prejudices, and the many difficulties they had to conquer, before they could discern truth, and embrace it. He had a natural and strong aversion to all levities and railings upon the subjects of such differences : Which gave him great advantage in dealing with those of different judgment ; and he still persisted in his moderation, how much soever it was either disliked or suspected by angry men. With soft words and strong arguments (says the writer of his life) he reasoned away the superstitions of the idolaters of *Rome* ; and with the warmth of his charity melted the stubborn hearts of several non-conformists of his own country. It was somewhat extraordinary, and almost unaccountable, that so good a man should meet with so much ill treatment as he did. But the returns of imprudence and malice, which were made to the Son of God himself, and to his Apostles, taught him to bear all such indignities with submission to the will of God, praying for those, who despitefully used him, and upon all occasions doing them good for evil. His enemies railed themselves quite out of temper against him, both living and dead. Living, he forgave them ; and being dead, he was insensible of their rudeness, and their barbarity to his memory could do him no hurt.' It is pleasing, and it is useful, to dwell upon these amiable

ble qualities of this son of peace and consolation ; especially in a view to controversy and opposition, my present subject, and my excuse for enlarging upon it somewhat further than I intended. For the observations hitherto made upon the temper and conduct of this great man, I refer you to the account of his *Life* in the places below specified *. I shall add two observations more, as being directly applicable to my present purpose. Being constrained, in his own just vindication, to publish a set of excellent discourses upon a very difficult subject, which drew upon him great odium and clamor from some ill-minded men, he exhibits them to the general view and consideration with a very short, but very pertinent account of what induced him to make them public. *The true reason*, says he, *was not that, which is commonly alleged for printing books, the importunity of friends ; but the importunate clamors and calumnies of others.* You observe, he doth not say of *enemies*, as the antithesis naturally led him to say, and as most other men would have said : such was his wisdom, and forbearance, and check upon himself. Well then, what return doth he make to those *others* ? *The author heartily prays God to forgive them, and to give them better minds* †. The other instance of his goodness is this : After his death there was found amongst his papers, a bundle of bitter *libels*, that had been vented against him. On this bundle he had written with his own hand the following words, which clearly shew the man, and deserve for ever to be remembred to his honour : I FORGIVE THE AUTHORS OF THESE BOOKS, AND PRAY GOD THAT HE MAY ALSO FORGIVE THEM ‡.

* Page 18, 16, 117, 120, 9, 117, 118, 120.

† Page 111.

‡ Append. p. 2.

As he hath enemies still living, tho' he is dead, I would recommend it to them to reflect with seriousness upon the following observation, 'To violate the quiet of the dead, and pursue the ashes of men, who have finished their course, and cannot answer for themselves, would pass for a crime against nature, even amongst the most barbarous nations. But the blackest spleen, and the most refined malice, cannot disturb this blessed soul, who is entered into his rest; nor signify much to lessen the veneration, that all future generations will pay to his memory. He is now above envy, and beyond slander, and his name is and will be long remembred with honour, when it will not be so much as known, that the greatest of his enemies was ever born *.'

I cannot think it will be improper to close the foregoing account of this incomparable person, with what we are assured was his judgment of the Christian religion, and its true and great design. 'He judged, that the great design of Christianity was 'the reforming mens natures, and governing their 'actions, the restraining their appetites and passions, 'the softening their tempers, and sweetning their 'humors, the composing their affections, and raising 'their minds above the interests and follies of this 'present world, to the hope and pursuit of endless 'blessedness: And he considered the whole Christian 'doctrine as a system of principles, all tending to 'this. He looked on mens contending about lesser 'matters, or about subtleties relating to those that 'are greater, as one of the chief practices of the 'powers of darkness, to defeat the *true* ends, for 'which the Son of God came into the world; and '[thought] that they did lead men into much dry 'and angry work; who, while they were hot in the

‘ making parties, and settling opinions, became so much the slacker in those great duties, which were chiefly designed by the Christian doctrine *.’ This accounts for his great moderation and temper in the management of all disputes, and for his exemplary patience and forbearance in the manner of his treating his adversaries.

After the account of such a man, I cannot now contentedly go back to any thing, that is grating, or less agreeable to a humane and candid nature. I have given you such a view of the acrimony and virulence of controversy, as must needs disgust you, and all good men like yourself, if it was not sufficiently evident, that my aim is, by making such a representation, not to excite, but to lay, that unruly spirit for the future.

In the short remainder of my letter, I will entertain you with some more agreeable objects, and endeavour to make you forget whatever may have been disagreeable in the former part of it.

The admirable temper, which some excellent Christians have shewn in reference to debate and controversy, and their candid sentiments on this subject, are really delightful to review, and give great satisfaction to a good mind, after a survey of the contrary temper in most of the common disputes and altercations. A few instances will be sufficient here, being presented only as short memento’s. What a lovely declaration was that, which the famous *Ephrem Syrus* (surnamed, the *Prophet of the Syrians*) made in his concluding scene ! and what Christian heart can help being pleased and affected with it ? *In my whole intercourse upon earth, I never suffered any foolish talk to come out of my lips, nor did I ever curse or revile any man, or maintain the*

* Page 132, 3.

least difference or controversy with any Christian in all my life. It is not easy to pass on, without making some observations here; the words are so agreeable, and the occasion so inviting. But I must deny myself that pleasure, having determined to be brief.

—Our renowned *Hooker* was admirable for his calm and sedate manner of managing a controversy. In that great one, which subsisted between him and Mr. *Travers*, we are assured by the author of his Life, that ‘a sharper reproof than the following, did never fall from the pen of this humble man, viz. *Your next argument consists of railing and of reasons: To your railing I say nothing; to your reasons I say what follows.* In his famous book of *Ecclesiastical polity*, as this writer justly observes, you have *reason delivered in sweet language, and void of any provocation: And in the prefatory epistle before it (which is really a charming piece) there are, says he, such bowels of love, and such a commixture of that love with reason, as was never exceeded but in Holy Writ.* I wish with all my heart, that that epistle were thorowly studied, and placed in constant view for a pattern, by all controversial writers, before they engage in writing; and that all, who are of a sharp satyrical turn, and so prone to indulge it in controversy, would remember those words, which are to be found in that epistle, and which indeed deserve their most serious attention, viz. *The time will come, when three words uttered with charity and meekness, shall receive a far more blessed reward, than three thousand volumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit.*

After this great man, few arose in succeeding times, that debated matters with the same calmness and seriousness that he did. The learned *Mede* and *Jackson* wrote generally with temper, as well as with sedateness of judgment. And it must be remembered to the credit of the excellent Lord *Falkland*,
that

that tho' a great master of wit, and a person of most lively parts, he never was keen in controversy, nor suffered his wit to have the government of his reason. Nor, being a well-bred Gentleman, could he approve of any intemperate sallies of it in others, least of all upon religious subjects: And wrathful and unmannerly disputes upon any he had an extreme aversion to. I must also do the justice to his opponent Mr. *White*, to acknowledge that he wrote like a man of integrity, and with due regard to decency and good manners in opposing him. This is acknowledged by Lord *Falkland* himself. What his Lordship says, will, I am sure, give you pleasure; as it shews the man of sense and candor, and, as Dr. *Triplet* justly says of him, *that a Gentleman writ with a scholar's pen.* ' I am to thank you, Sir, ' (for in this age we are beholding to them, who do ' what is fit) for not mixing gall with your ink; ' since I have ever thought, that there should be as ' little *bitterness* in a treatise of *controversy*, as in a ' *love-letter*, and that the contrary way was both ' void of Christian charity, and human wisdom, as ' serving only to fright away the game, and make ' the adversaries unwilling to receive instruction ' from him, from whom they have received injuries; and making themselves [at the same time] ' less able to discover *truth* (which St. *Austin* says, ' is *hard* even for him to find, who is *calm*, but *impossible* for him, that is *angry*;) raising besides a ' great suspicion of ignorance in him that useth it; ' since it is a very true rule, which we have received ' from *Hierocles*, viz. *Confidence of knowledge conduceth much to meekness.* Now in this I intend to ' take You for my *pattern*, and the same author for ' my *counsellor*; and being able to overthrow what ' is false (for so must I think I can, and such I must ' take your reasons to be, as long as they persuade ' me

‘ me not ;) resisting errors without anger, and pur-
 ‘ suing truth with mildness. Now this I must pro-
 ‘ fess for myself, that since I considered any thing
 ‘ in religion, and knew that there were several of
 ‘ them [several modes of religion] in the world, I
 ‘ never avoided to hear (at least) any man that
 ‘ was willing to persuade me by reason, that any of
 ‘ them was the true. Nay rather I have laid wait
 ‘ to meet with such of all sorts, as were most likely
 ‘ to say most on their side: And tho’ almost all
 ‘ that undertake the search of so important a truth
 ‘ [as that of religion] do it better provided with
 ‘ sharpness of wit and solidity of judgment [than I
 ‘ can pretend to ;] yet I verily believe, that few do
 ‘ it with that indifference and equality which is fit
 ‘ for a Judge, and with which I both began and
 ‘ continue it.’ Can any thing discover a more can-
 did, a more ingenuous, a more noble temper of
 mind than these words? A pattern, I think, even
 for Divines to admire, as well as to imitate. This
 is taken from his Reply to Mr. *White*. I will add
 another passage from his discourse of the *Infallibility* ;
 which will still heighten your opinion of the piety, as
 well as integrity of this excellent Man.—‘ If any
 ‘ can prove, by any infallible way, the infallibility
 ‘ of the Church of *Rome*, and the necessity, under
 ‘ pain of damnation, for all men to believe it, I
 ‘ will subscribe to it. And if any man vouchsafe to
 ‘ think either this [discourse upon that subject] or
 ‘ the author of it, of value enough to confute the
 ‘ one, and inform the other, I shall desire him to
 ‘ do it with proceeding to the business ; and, not
 ‘ standing upon any small *slip* of mine (of which
 ‘ this may be full) to do it with that *temper* which
 ‘ is fit to be used by men that are not so passionate,
 ‘ as to have the definition of reasonable creatures in
 ‘ vain ; remembering that truth, in likelihood, is,
 ‘ where

' where God her author was ; in the *still voice*, and
 ' not in the *loud wind* ; and that *Epiphanius* excuseth
 ' himself, if he have called any heretics, in his an-
 ' ger, deceivers or wretches. And I request him
 ' also, to help to bring me to the truth, if I be out
 ' of it, not only by his *arguments*, but also by his
 ' *prayers* : Which way if he use, and I still continue
 ' on the part I am of, and yet am neither wilfully
 ' blind, nor do impudently deny what I see ; then
 ' I am confident, that as *He* will not have reason to
 ' be offended with me in this world, so neither will
 ' God, for that, punish me in the next.'—How
 rarely do we find such men as this among dispu-
 tants ! not only men of his parts, but men of his
 temper.

Some indeed, writing upon controverted subjects,
 in later times, have done honour both to their pro-
 fession as Divines, and to their religion as Christians.
 I think I may point out, as worthy of notice and
 imitation, the ingenuity and candor as well as rea-
 soning, of the author of the *Reasonableness of Con-
 formity*, in answer to *Calamy*. And the Reply made
 by the same writer to Dr. *Atterbury* (who had treat-
 ed him with a contempt and spleen, which he no
 way deserved, and which by no means became the
 calling of the animadverter) breathes, in my opi-
 nion, a truly mild, and meek, and Christian spirit,
 becoming the character and profession of a Christian
 Clergiman. The same Dr. *Atterbury* afterwards
 became far more humble, and more decent. Af-
 flictions brought him to consideration and reason ;
 and softened a spirit, and allayed a heat, which
 were naturally very strong in him, and very diffi-
 cult to be subdued. His answer to *Oldmixon* from
France is a fine little piece ; calm, genteel, and
 perfectly satisfactory. The answer given by Dr.
Conybeare to *Tindal*, and that by Dr. *Leland* to *Tindal*
 and

and *Morgan* (as also to a later adversary to the Christian cause) are allowed by all to be as candid, as they are solid. One only expression in *Deart Conybeare* has been excepted to (how small the offence! I wish there were never any greater given) *Fit advocate for such a cause!* The observation is certainly just, nor has it been pretended, that it is too severe, which I think nobody can truly say; but being the only instance in the whole book, that has in it the least seeming severity, it has therefore, I suppose, been the more noticed, tho' not, that I know of, censured. Which, in my judgment, only shews, how much writers of controversy ought to be upon their guard, and what an advantage it is to their character as well as to their cause, when they manage with proper temper and decency.

To end this letter; I cannot, after all my endeavours, reconcile myself fully to that declaration of the late *Dr. Trapp*, a man of some warmth: *Whoever attacks me furiously, shall never persuade me to defend myself moderately* *. I allow, that he ought to defend himself; but why should he do it *immoderately*? Is it not sufficient to defend himself with reason? and is it not right to do it with moderation of spirit? When *St. Paul* was convened before *Festus* and the Council, and *the Jews*, standing round about, laid many and grievous complaints against him, which they could not prove; he defends himself with the greatest mildness and gentleness: *Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the Temple, nor yet against Cæsar, have I offended any thing at all.—If I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die, &c.* And when the *Son of the Blessed, the Prince of Peace*, was brought before the Governor, and the chief priests and scribes

* *Pref. to Preservative, Vol. I.*

*stood and vehemently (or furiously) accused him, of what he had never done nor said, he was mild and gentle as a lamb, he even forbore defending himself, he answered nothing. And he hath given a law to his followers, ' a law of mildness and gentleness, ' of submission and forbearance towards one another. ' We are commanded to follow peace with all men ; ' to follow after the things that make for peace ; as ' much as lieth in us to live peaceably with all men. ' We are forbidden all feuds and quarrels, enjoined not to revenge ourselves, but to give place unto ' wrath ; to let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, ' and clamor, and evil-speaking be put away from us, ' with all malice ; to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for ' Christ's sake forgives Us. These are the laws of ' Christianity, which whenever they are duly entertained, produce the most gentle and good natured ' principles, the most innocent and quiet carriage. ' This eminently appeared in the life of our blessed ' Saviour, who was the most incomparable instance ' of kindness and civility, of peace and quietness. ' We never find him in all his life treating any ' with sharpness and severity but the Scribes and ' Pharisees, who were a pack of surly, malicious, ' ill-natured fellows, and could be wrought upon ' by no other methods *.' And of the followers of this mild and divine Instructor we find an amiable character given, as observing his precepts, and pursuing his steps. Origen defending them against Celsus, ' Both among your Philosophers and Physicians (says he) there are sects that have perpetual ' feuds and quarrels with each other ; whereas we, ' who have entertained the laws of the blessed Jesus, ' and have learnt both to speak and to do according*

* Cave's *Primit. Christianity*, part 3. chap. 3.

‘ to his doctrine, *blefs them that revile us ; being
‘ persecuted, we suffer it ; being defamed, we intreat.*
You may perhaps hear further soon from,

Yours, &c.

Philadelphus.

II.

— **W**AS it not a severe reflection upon religion, which we find in one of our old comic poets, exposing the unhappy alterations about it, between the Divines of the last age? *It is so*, says one : *It is not so*, says another. *It is so ; it is not so ; It is not so ; it is so ;* make up the whole of the dispute, for a quarter of an hour together, between *Inigo Lantborn* and his Puppet at *Bartholomew-Fair*. Alas ! that occasion should be given by Divines, to expose religion after this manner : Religion, the best and noblest of things, and the most conducive to the good of mankind ; Religion, the plainest and simplest of things *, and the most easily understood by all that will understand it. Take out of religion what does not belong to it, and you will all soon understand it, you will all soon agree : you will no longer stand upon your contradictions, *It is* and *it is not* ; which is a shame to you all ; but you will all say, with one voice and consent, *This*

* ‘ *Christianity, reduced to its principles, is more plain and
‘ simple than is commonly imagined, and is calculated for gene-
‘ ral utility.*’ Thus, justly and judiciously, observes the Au-
thor of the late *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*, in his sober,
sensible, rational, and truly Christian preface ; which contains
many important truths, tending to the advancement of this reli-
gion in the world, and to the establishing of charity and peace
among those who profess it.

is the way, walk in it : This is the plain and easy way ; walk lovingly together in the path to Happiness. Christianity, as laid down in the Bible, will point out that path, and will point it out with the greatest clearness and exactness ; so that you need not seek any by-paths ; nor will it be wise in you to follow any such. *When men* (it is an observation, as I remember mentioned by M. de St. Evremond ; when they) *have taken out of Christianity, what they have foisted into it, there will be but ONE RELIGION, as plain in its institutions, doctrines, and discipline, as it is pure in its morals.* There will be no more, *It is so, and it is not* : There will be a concord and agreement, even between Divines ; and the merry men of the stage will have no more room to expose them. It was a great Divine of the last century (a Bishop, if I am not mistaken) that made this observation : *It is an evil disease among Divines* (I suppose he means among *them*, above most other people) *that they cannot endure dissensions*, or those who differ from them in opinion or practice. Why should it be so amongst the disciples of peace ? and especially among the teachers of it ? Can any one give a reason, why they, of all others, should be more impatient of dissent, and more inveterate against dissenters ? The reason, if any, is this : Men have *foisted* into Christianity, what does not belong to it ; and they are more fond of what is foisted, than of what is genuine.

I must also observe, that the *heat*, as well as prejudice, that commonly prevails among such men, doth great hurt to religion. They are many of them fiery and intemperate in their zeal. They cannot, or will not argue, with sufficient coolness. They will not give either themselves or others, time to consider. They expose their cause and their profession, by this untoward zeal. If truth is the

thing in view, can they not shew it with clearness, and argue upon it with coolness? For my own part, I am fully convinced, that nothing does truth more right, than the coolness of those that offer it: Which commonly suffers more by the heat of its defenders, than from the arguments of its opposers.

Dr. Fiddes, in his *Treatise of Morality*, observes, that the present age is greatly improved above the former in point of morals, as well as of many other excellences, which are an honour to our nature, and do credit to our times. I wish we had no reason to complain of the continuance of the *old* spirit of controversy; which our many later improvements have not yet been able totally to exterminate. I have been comparing the controversies of the present age, with those of the former; and tho' I see abundant reason to rejoice in our greater decency upon the whole, our divines being generally more candid as well as more intelligent, yet I cannot think there is no need of some further endeavours to correct the peccant humours that are remaining, and to discountenance every thing in controversy that may have a tendency either to irritate mens passions, or pervert their judgment. I have found great pleasure myself, and I hope also some benefit, in conversing with peaceable men, and in reading pacific writers. There is a wisdom of sentiments, and goodness of temper in them, that makes a happy impression upon the mind, inspiring it with benevolence and candor, and inclining it to a love and pursuit of peace. I am willing to hope that numbers can bear testimony to this observation, from what they themselves have experienced on occasions of this kind. Observing some of the former ill qualities still to prevail in controversy, notwithstanding our various improvements, and knowing but too well their pernicious effects, in regard to religion
and

and truth, which are highly incommoded by them ; I intend to single out two or three, and try how far I can succeed in applying, or at least suggesting, some proper remedies ; and those made ready to my hand by one of the most assiduous peace-makers that our Church produced in the foregoing century. In those unhappy days,

*When civil dudgeon first grew high,
And men fell out they knew not why,*

the pious and peaceable Bishop *Hall* did every thing in his power to allay the heat of parties, to bring men to consideration and reason, and to reconcile them to one another in love. His *Christian Peacemaker*, and treatise of *Christian Moderation*, both published in those times, give ample testimonies of this, and are very well calculated to promote peace and piety. Among other obstructions to both, I see he takes notice of *three* very bad practices, which are still too common among disputants, viz. *personal railing, injurious accusing, and drawing unjust inferences*. I think these practices are as pernicious as they are common, and shall therefore make some small attempt, with the assistance of this good Prelate, to lessen their repute, and weaken their efficacy.

As to the *first* of these ; ' In matters of religious differences (says he) we ought to refrain from all *railing terms*, and *spiteful provocations*. These only bewray the *distempered heart*, from which they proceed ; making men neglect the merits of their cause, whilst they are taken up with an idle profusion of words. Words heighten the quarrel, and provoke them to spit out their venom at each other. But it is an old and a just observation, well deserving notice, that *when a man falls to personal railing, it is a*

shew'd sign, that he is drawn dry of matter, and despairs of any farther defence of his cause * ; as we see that the *dog*, which running back falls to brawling and barking, hath done fighting †. I wish this was duly considered by our railing disputants ; with whom it is a common practice, when argument fails, to have recourse to personal invectives and scurrility.

2. The Bishop intimates, that in judging of controversies and controversial writers, it is requisite that we should entertain a *charitable distrust*, and not take an adversary's word for the state of his opposite. ' We say truly in our common proverb, *Ill will never said well*. God forbid that the same man should, in the same cause, be accuser, witness, and judge : What would become of innocence, where malice and power should be met ? How short a cut is that, which the spiteful author of the war of the fifth Gospel takes, to convince all gainsayers ? *Westphalus*, saith he, calls *Calvin* heretic ; *Calvin* calls *Westphalus* heretic : therefore they are both heretics. May not any *Mahometan*, by this way of arguing, refute the whole profession of Christianity ? God forbid that any man should ever be, what an enemy would have him thought to be. Would we think it fair and just, to be so dealt with, before the awful tribunal of Heaven ? Would we have the grand enemy of mankind believed in all his suggestions against our innocence ? Why then should we admit

* ' As great guns (says an ingenious Writer) are the *Ratio ultima Regum*, so the calling men by some odious names, ranking them amongst heretics, setting the mob against them, and such sort of *pauvretez*, are the *Ratio ultima Disputatorum*, and supply the want of ammunition : and yet it is not altogether fair and honourable war ; it is shooting chewed bullets, and glass bottles.'

† *Christian Moderation*, L. 2. § 15.

of this wrong in each other? At a contentious *bar*, where wrangling fomentors of quarrels are wont to aggravate all advantages, this liberty (I know not how justly) hath been given, that they commonly frame large bills of complaint, and suggest wrongs that were never done : But for *Divines*, in the causes of God, who pretend to plead for truth, before God and his Angels, for them to be thus lavish in their criminations, is an high violation of Christian charity and justice *.

In respect of the *third* thing, this worthy Prelate wisely cautions us, not to take that for a man's *opinion*, which an adversary will say doth by necessary *inference* follow upon it; but only that which he himself *professes to maintain*. ' The force of consequences is many times very deceitful, and such as may easily mislead our judgment. The disputant indeed thinks to make them good; but the accused on either side detests them, and with good reason. There is one considerable disadvantage attends this unjustifiable practice; for by this means the honest and ingenuous inquirer is drawn from a commendable search of necessary truths, into a wild chase of invidious *inferences* : And now, the quarrel being fallen from Divinity, and removed to the schools of logic, that disputant must carry it, who can bring the most sophistry; not he, who hath most truth on his side. What is it that distracts the reformed Churches of Christendom, but this injurious conceit of disavowed *inferences* ? Away with these rigid illations, when we have to do with fellow-christians and brethren. Each holdeth his own; both disclaim the inferences, and, in their sense, justly may. If we would act the part of equal judges, we should mind, not what doth seemingly follow up-

* Sect. 10.

on any opinion which we disapprove, but what follows in the conscience of those who hold it *. Were this rule held, how happy were the Church, how certain our peace? When we have done our best, there will be errors enough in the Church: We need not therefore make them more. In the first ages of Christianity, no heresy was fastened upon any man, but upon open and acknowledged conviction; and if he cleared himself of the charge, he was pronounced innocent. — Neither indeed is it just or equal, that a man should, by the malice of an enemy, be made guilty of those crimes, which himself abhors. What I will own, is mine; what is cast upon me, is my adversary's: And if I be, by deductions, fetcht into such errors, the fault is not in my faith, but in my reasoning; my brain may err, but my heart doth not. Away then, ye uncharitable, ye cruel tortors of opinions, dilaters of errors, delators of your brethren, incendiaries of the Church, haters of peace; away with this unjust violence; let no man bear more than his own burden: Frame not imaginary monsters of error, on purpose that you may find something to contend with. He that makes any man worse than he is, makes himself worse than he †. Enough surely to put men upon reflection, and to make those that are serious to disdain this mean and unchristian practice.

I shall add here the *concluding* advice which this good Bishop gives in relation to controversy: And that is, that however our *judgments* may differ (which cannot in many cases be avoided) we should never-

* The observation holds good to this day; and a late Writer doth well to remind us, *that men ought not to be charged with all the consequences which may perhaps regularly follow from their notions, whilst they neither draw them, nor perceive them, nor own them.* Jortin.

† Sect. 11.

theless compose our *affections* to peace, and to all tender respects, and kind offices, towards those who differ from us. 'What if our brains be divers? yet let our hearts be one. ——' You know, brother (says one of the Reformers, upon an occasion of difference about modes) that the *custom* is otherwise with *us*; but I *bear* with it, because it is not available for us to contend?' And another, ——' That there may be a friendly concord, and perfect love between us, we shall not fail to do whatsoever lies in our power; especially I, for my part, will intirely blot out of my thoughts all the offence that I had conceived, and will promise all love and fidelity to you. And I earnestly pray God, that by the grace of his holy Spirit, he would unite our hearts in Christian love, and purge out of them all the dross of human diffidence, and devilish malice and suspicion, to the glory of his holy name, the salvation of many souls, and to the despite of the devil, the pope, and all their adherents.' —— This sweet and peaceable disposition (our good Prelate goes on) cannot but be graciously accepted of God, betwixt us that are brethren in the wide house of his Church. But if, notwithstanding, we should happen to meet with a set of men who are disposed to be *quarrelsome* (like the frantic fellow that *Suidas* mentions, who would needs *wrestle* with every man he met) the best way is to do as some have advised, when we are provoked to fight with *women*, to *run away*. —— *Shun profane and vain babling*. As for *peace*, if it fly from us, we must run after it: *Follow peace with all men*. But if, after all our quickest paces, it will not be overtaken; if we still meet with those, who are *enemies to peace*; humour some *children*, who love to hear themselves cry, and make a noise; —— if neither respect to the glory of the God of peace, nor to the peace and welfare of the dear Church and spouse

spouse of Christ, nor of themselves, can prevail any thing ; what remains, but to mourn in silence for the irreparable breaches of the sacred walls of *Jerusalem*, and, together with our zealous prayers for the opposed peace of *Sion*, to appeal to the justice of that holy and righteous God, with

Increpa, Domine, BESTIAS CALAMI *.

I shall here only subjoin the sweet and peaceable words of our excellent *Hooker*, in his answer to *Travers* ; being his mild, affectionate, and very affecting words, in his last application to him.—‘ But since there can come nothing of *contention*, but the mutual wast of the parties contending, till a *common enemy* dance in the ashes of them both ; I do wish heartily that the grave advice which *Constantine* gave for re-uniting of his clergy, so many times, upon some small occasions, in so lamentable sort, divided ; or rather the strict commandment of *Christ* unto his, that they should not be divided at all ; may at the length, if it be his blessed will, prevail so far, at least in *this* corner of the Christian world, to the burying and quite forgetting of *strife*, together with the *causes* that have either bred it, or brought it up ; that things of small moment never disjoin them, whom one God, one Lord, one faith, one spirit, one baptism, bands of so great force, have linked ; that a respective eye towards things wherewith we should not be disquieted, make us not, as through infirmity the very patriarchs themselves sometimes were, full gorged, unable to speak peaceably to their own brother. Finally, that no strife may ever be heard of again, but *this* ; WHO SHALL HATE

* Sect. 16. Vid. *Psal.* LXVIII. aliàs, *bestiam dentis*.

STRIFE MOST, WHO SHALL PURSUE PEACE AND
UNITY WITH SWIFTEST PACES.

P.

N U M B. IV.

S I R,

22 Nov. 1749.

I Think it not improper to tell you, that I have lately read a Treatise, intituled, 'Free and Candid Disquisitions.' Though it has been published but some Months, yet I find it has been in manuscript some Years. I will own to you, that the Contents of the Book have engaged my thoughts a good deal; as I dare say they have those of several other members of the established Church. The proposals offered by the Gentlemen concerned in the Treatise, are doubtless of a very serious and important nature, and require all the attention and judgment which the mind of man is capable of giving them: for which reason I am induced to believe, that our governors will not enter upon the consideration of them, till they see what reception they meet with from the public. Many valuable ends may be answered by this delay. Prejudices may be removed, mistakes may be rectified, and a kind and tender regard will be paid to the prejudices and infirmities of the *well-meaning*; several of whom, by time and a due exercise of their thinking powers, may be very willing to give up, what without due reflection they may be very unwilling to part with. On the other hand, it is not unlikely that some persons may be disposed to make free and candid remarks on the free and candid Disquisitions, and endeavour in the spirit of meekness, and Christian Charity, to convince the authors of their supposed mistakes. A
Debate

Debate on this sacred *, this interesting affair, carried on in a free, friendly, deliberate, judicious manner *without doors*, would, I am persuaded, be neither *unacceptable*, nor (may I be allowed to add) *unuseful* to those noble and worthy persons, who are to manage and adjust it *within doors*. For by having the arguments on both sides of the question, as it were in one view before their eyes, they will be better able to judge how far the peace of society is like to be affected by such an undertaking ; or, whether upon the whole, it be expedient to enter upon a sixth Review of the Liturgy, or not.

The determination of this important question ought intirely to be referred to the wisdom and piety of our superiors ; to whom the authors have with becoming modesty submitted it. For, whether what they offer be *right*, or *wrong* ; this, I think, is undeniable, that a modest application to our Governors, for redress of what, after our best inquiry, we judge to be wrong, and a due acquiescence in their determination, is not unbecoming us, as members either of civil or religious society. A well meant attempt to do good is always laudable ; and sometimes highly beneficial to communities. But to aim at reformation by faction, and tumult, is always odious, and not infrequently productive of very pernicious effects. The wrath of man can never work the righteousness of God ; and where strife

* The Gentleman's observation is just. The affair is indeed both sacred and interesting. This very reason it was, that put the authors upon applying ; and this very reason, they hope, will justify their application, if they have tendered it (as they have endeavoured to do) in a becoming manner. For, in their opinion, things so very sacred and interesting are not to be trifled with, nor therefore to be left in a condition, that will subject them to contempt. Which must necessarily be the consequence, where they are left in a state of neglect so long, and no provision is made for their necessary reformation.

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and envy is, there must be confusion and every evil work.

I rely on your known candor to receive what I have written as a token of my sincere regard for the welfare of the Church of *England*, and of my earnest wish, that, if any thing be really *wrong* in her constitution, it may be *expunged*; and that every thing which is really *right*, may be *retained*. I am, &c.

This excellent letter deserves serious and unprejudiced attention, and will, it may be hoped, be allowed it. Both those who are friends to a Review, and those who judge less favourably of such an undertaking, ought certainly to consider, with great calmness of thought, and impartiality of judgment, concerning what is here suggested. It is not on the one hand right, to say that nothing should be revised; nor, on the other, that every thing should be so. There is a medium between extremes. And the worthy author, if we mistake not, hath pointed out that medium. In a debate, such as he proposes, and seems to expect, let all rancor be laid aside, and every thing that may irritate, be forborne. If this method be taken, we may hope to see a happy issue of such debate; and it may in great measure tend, as he observes, to give a just view of the argument on both sides of the question.

We may here transiently take notice of what another worthy person (of like consequence and judgment) hath been pleased to suggest upon the subject, viz. ' That he thought the present a proper
' time for entering upon the affair of a Review;
' but that whatever was attempted, must be done
' with great caution; otherwise the remedy might
' prove worse than the disease. He would have the
' thing candidly considered, every particular coolly

‘ and deliberately debated ; and, when the alterations have been duly weighed, would have a large impression of the revised form printed off, and dispersed throughout the Kingdom ; so that a copy might, if possible, be in every one’s hands. He thinks also, that some competent time, perhaps a few years, should be permitted to intervene (to the intent that all may see the reasonableness, and consequently shew their approbation of the good design proposed) before it should receive a parliamentary sanction.’

By these representations, it may, we hope, appear, that the Authors of the *Disquisitions* are of the moderating side, and neither so extremely addicted to their own sentiments, as to approve of nothing that may interfere with them ; nor so little desirous of a Review, as to be indifferent about it. They only wish that things may be maturely considered ; and after a free and fair examination, conducted with prudence and temper, that the requisite alterations may be made, both for the relief of burthened consciences, and for the honour and welfare of the Church of *England*.

S I R,

WHETHER the Reverend Mr. *White* (of whom you make favourable mention in your Letter) be a proper person to animadvert upon the *Disquisitions*, I really cannot say, as being so little conversant either in his, or in any other controversial writings. The ill temper they are generally penned with, gives me an aversion almost to them all. At least, I seldom read any of them, either with pleasure or improvement. I profit most by those, which are written with candor and decency ; and do discern truth more easily thereby. To write with

with a proper temper and ingenuity in debate, is one great point ; which yet we are, for the most part, too deficient in, to the great prejudice of truth, and the hindrance of peace and love. God forgive us, and make us better !

I continue still to wish, that some person like yourself, would begin to shew a fair pattern of moderation, in writing upon the subject, if any thing further is wrote upon it. This may help to give controversies a better turn. What should they be else, but a *fair and dispassionate Inquiry after Truth* ? And what will any other attainment avail us, if truth be either lost, or not honestly sought after, in the course of a dispute ? We little consider its value, when we have any thing different in our eye ; and we blind ourselves, as much as we do others, when we deviate from a question, to indulge a favourite passion, which has nothing to do with the Inquiry.

To another (relating to the *controversial writings* before-mentioned.) — I love no contention of that sort between Protestants. I seriously lament their unhappy differences, and heartily wish they would all be at quiet. For I cannot well see what they should so much differ about. Are they not all of the same faith ? all Christians, all Protestants ? And have they not all of them the liberty they desire and think reasonable, that of worshipping God in their own way ? What would they have more, either the one side or the other ? What need therefore of falling out, what occasion for attacking one another, after this ? Let each of them sit down quietly under his own proper vine and fig-tree, be thankful to God and the Government, and live at peace. As to remaining differences, since the *Law* allows them, let *Us* do the same ; let us *forbear*. We have really no business with each other now, in the way of quarrel ; we have no real grounds for it : Our business

ness is, to be quiet, to mind each of us our own concerns, to live as neighbours and fellow-subjects. I believe all the best Christians on both sides are desirous to do this; and am persuaded that the best members of the Church of *England*, who lament our disunion, are of the same charitable disposition with regard to those who recede from our communion, that St. *Austin* was towards the re-baptizing brethren of his time; of whom he speaks in these compassionate terms, exhorting the members of his Church to consider and treat them as brethren. *In uno corpore, &c.** Being all of us members of one body, all of us confessing one Head even Christ, we ought all of us to be united in one body, under this one Head.— I earnestly exhort you, brethren, to Charity, not only towards one another, but even towards those who are without, whether they be Pagans, who have not yet embraced the faith of Christ, or those who are divided from us, confessing the same Head that we do, though separated from our body. Let us grieve for these latter, as being our Brethren. They are still our Brethren, whether they approve of this title or no; and we shall not cease to look upon them as such, so long as they continue to say OUR FATHER, addressing the same God in their prayers:—And whilst they celebrate the same Sacraments, and answer the same AMEN that we do, though not joining in our assemblies, I solicit your tenderest charity to offer up your Prayers to God for them.—One would imagine from these words of this ancient Bishop of *Africa*, that he could not have approved of the uncharitableness that subsists here in *England*, between the brethren of different communions; and would have thought the conduct of each party to be inconsistent with their profession as fellow-christians.—

Philander.

* *Enarr. in Psal. (Sec. Vulg.) XXXII.*

The

The Authors of the *Disquisitions*, whom the world hath been too apt to misunderstand, or too willing to misrepresent, in relation to their sentiments upon the subject of union between Protestants, think this a proper place for them to put in a word or two (which they do *once for all*) concerning that matter; hoping they shall never again be either misunderstood or misrepresented on this head, after they have told the world plainly and openly their mind. These then are their sentiments.

They think union to be indeed desirable, and scruple not to say, that they earnestly wish for it; as they apprehend it would do credit to Religion, and promote the happiness of Society. But let the world be told once more, what it hath so often been told already, but hath hitherto overlookt or disregarded, that it was not with a view to this union (not at least with a direct and immediate view to it) that they made their application. They had occasion more than enough to apply, upon the account of the Church of *England itself*, and of the *Members* of it; And on *their* behalf, on theirs only, have they pleaded. Take away whatever doth dishonor, whatever doth disservice to our Church; remove whatever gives just offence to honest, thoughtful, and judicious men in our communion; and the great intent of those who preferred the application, is fully answered. As to those who are without the pale, these men leave them to their own judgment, and are glad they are allowed the free use of it by the Government of this Land; which they judge to be a most equitable allowance, wishing it may always be continued, and that it might take place and be perpetuated in every nation under heaven; being persuaded that it tends to the preservation and happiness of every nation, as the contrary tends to destroy both.—These authors therefore wish each

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party

party to be easy, and neither side to be an aggressor upon the other. Enjoy each of you with peace and friendliness, what the Legislature now allows you. *Let not Ephraim envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim. Fall not out with each other by the way, in your passage towards Heaven; for ye are brethren, and hope all of you alike to meet there in the end, and be happy in the general Assembly and Church of the first-born, and of the spirits of just men made perfect.*

Upon the whole, it is the opinion of the Authors before-mentioned, that it is better, as things now stand, that there should be Dissenters, than that there should be none. They may be a means, in the hand of God, to preserve our religious liberty, and to prevent the return of slavery. If they use their liberty with discretion and sobriety, we need not envy their enjoyment of it, nor wish it to be taken from them. On the contrary, we have the greatest reason to pray that it may be continued, since they are now a check upon us. Were the check once removed, either by a total coalition, or suppression; who knows what a favorable aspect we might cast again towards *Rome*, and what an inclination we might shew towards a Re-union with her? Let these people then still continue a separate body, if they chuse it, and enjoy their present liberty, without any diminution. Let the Church of *England*, for her own sake, and that of her children, reform herself, without any regard to these people, who may be of more service to her in their present situation, than they can perhaps be in another.—These are the sentiments of the Authors of the *Disquisitions*, plainly and at large. Let the Public now make what use of them they please.

N U M B. V.

S I R,

Dec. 7, 1749.

THE account you give of the favourable reception which the Disquisitions meet with, is neither unacceptable nor new. It is confirmed by intelligences of the same sort from many other hands, and from different parts of the Kingdom. And we are well assured, that the scheme is approved by many worthy persons in *Ireland*; where, as we judge from some informations received from thence, it has a fairer prospect of succeeding by degrees, than with us on this side the water. But you say that there are great clamours in the West, and in some other parts: Which we can easily believe, and do not at all wonder at, considering the temper and prejudices of the men you describe. There never was any useful proposal made, or great undertaking executed, without some opposition. Nor can it be expected that the present should succeed, without various remonstrances, and many secret as well as open endeavours to defeat it. We hear all this with patience, and not without hopes that God will prosper us in the end. To him we commit our cause, believing it assuredly to be his: Otherwise we should never have embarked in it.

The information you give of the several *Answers* that are preparing (and one, as you intimate, by a Gentleman of your acquaintance) occasions no more surprize, than your other friendly informations do. I have communicated the account you favoured me with, and am now to lay before you the observations made upon it: Which are to the following effect.

1. ' The authors of the Disquisitions are in no pain about any *answers* that shall be made to them;

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because,

because, if they have not written according to the minds of others, they have written according to their own, and have done it with a sincere view of promoting religion and truth. What further then have they to be concerned about, or what have they to desire more, than that both may be promoted by *others*, in a better and more effectual manner than they have been by *them*? True religion can be but one. If these authors have mistaken it, or the means of advancing it, they cannot take it ill, they ought to take it well, that others will be at the pains to rectify their mistakes; and they will be obliged to any that will point out their errors in a friendly manner, shewing that the means they have proposed are wrong, and suggesting others that may be more likely to have effect.

2. The argument in favour of a *review* is in itself (they think) so reasonable, that objections will not be able to do it much hurt. They may, no doubt, perplex, but cannot overthrow it. Light will some time or other shine out, in the midst of darkness; and men, at some critical seasons, and cooler intervals, will attend to reason, in the depth of prejudice. Truth, on which side soever it shall appear, will carry its native lustre along with it; and eyes that are now clouded, will be inlightened by it. Nor will hearts always remain stubborn, that are now resolute against receiving it. Let it only be discovered with lenity, and it will in time do its work with efficacy.

3. If the cause be a just one, why should we not believe that it will have friends as well as adversaries? and as many at least, if not more of the former, than of the latter. What reason have we to think so ill of mankind, as to judge them to be all bigots? Observation and experience happily convince us, that bigotry is wearing off, and that there
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are numbers who have not bowed the knee either to *Baal* or to *Mammon*, and will always attend to reason and truth, whenever they are fairly and ingeniously laid before them. Those who approve of our proposals, are at liberty to abet them; and it is not doubted but they will befriend them, whilst that liberty continues. Those who are against them, may produce their reasons; and if liberty is discountenanced, their opposition will succeed, and the cause of a reformation will be intirely at an end.

4. The few remarks that have hitherto been made upon the Disquisitions, have been impartially considered by the authors. They leave their treatise to answer for itself, as well as it can. They only say, once more, They have spoken their minds. Others may speak theirs. The Public is to judge.

After these observations, from persons the most concerned to make them, and giving me leave to impart them, I can only add that I am, with the sincerest friendship and esteem, &c.

Fidelio.

My Lord,

— **W**E hear little of the success of the work; but that it spreads very fast, and is generally well received, especially among candid men; who express their hearty wishes that it may prove a means of bringing on a reform in time. Some are nibbling; and, as it is said, are preparing answers. They have written nothing as yet that seems worth regarding. Those who cannot write, have recourse to the stale topic, and in some parts of the country are pretty clamorous, especially in the *West*. It grieves one to observe that the inferior Clergy, whose ease and interest seems to be the most concerned in promoting a Review, are in some places found to be the

most perverse against it. But we hope that the men of this leaven are not quite so numerous, as they are unreasonable ; nor so potent, as they are litigious. We wish for no more than a calm and dispassionate examination of the subject. Where temper is wanting, there is but little room to hope for impartial judgment. — Men of more exalted stations in the Church, to their honor be it spoken, are said to be far more candid, with regard to the proposal on foot, than those of the inferior classes ; who, being less conversant in the world, are commonly men of more contracted views, and form to themselves apprehensions, which persons of larger thoughts see to be without foundation. But it may please God by degrees, to bring us to better temper, and better judgment.

[Since this Letter was written, it has given us great pleasure to hear, from several parts, that the prejudice against the Disquisitions is very much abated, and continues to abate, in proportion as men allow themselves the liberty to look into the book themselves, and consider the contents of it with fairness ; insomuch that many who at first were very much set against it, are since become its advocates and fast friends. — We still wait with patience, and, persuaded of the justness of our cause, do look up with hope to Him who can overrule mens prejudices, and mollify their hearts, and cause all opposition, in the event, to turn to his praise.]

N U M B. VI.

*To a Reverend and worthy Dignitary of the Church
of Wells.*

S I R,

THE ingenious Gentleman who bestows his *Remarks* on the Disquisitions, in some *Letters* directed to you, has been pleased to appeal to your judgment, on the important subject which those Disquisitions contain. He has an unquestionable right to canvass what they have proposed ; and every friend to truth and to piety will be pleased with every honourable attempt to discover the one, and promote the other.

How far the Gentleman may have succeeded to his wishes, either in convincing you, or giving satisfaction to the public, on the heads which he has been discussing, he may perhaps know by this time, and the authors whom he opposes do not take upon them to inquire : Only they wish well to him, and to his cause if it be a good one ; and will never envy him any reputation he may gain by a fair and disinterested management of it. Such a management they think the cause deserves, and requires at the hands of every one that undertakes it : And a favourable treatment at such hands, they hope they themselves have some reasonable title to, from the manner in which they have conducted their inquiries.

Whether the Gentleman himself be of the same judgment as to this point, must be left to him ; and these authors apprehend they have no right to interfere with his sentiments upon it. But from what has hitherto appeared, they observe with concern,

that he hath given indications of a temper, as well as of a judgment, very different from theirs.

As to his differing from them in judgment, it gives them no surprize nor uneasiness. Judgments are various, and ever will be, so long as men are men, and pursue different methods of inquiry. This therefore, as it creates to them no offence, so neither will it ever draw from them an angry word, or any thing (if they can help it) that may tend to make him uneasy. For they wish his content and happiness, and the continuance of his freedom of judgment, as they do their own.

If there be any thing in his writings that hath justly offended them, it is this: His manner of treating them and their argument, A manner they could have wished, for his sake, if not also for their own, had been a far better one than it is. They think he hath disparaged himself and his cause thereby, doing them and theirs in the mean time no hurt.

The due management of such a subject being of great consequence to Religion, whose honour and success are very much concerned in it, which soever side has the best of the argument; it is judged proper to address *You*, Sir, as a Minister of Religion, and a person for whom the author may have no small regard, which it may be presumed you may also have for Him; that you would be so good, out of due concern for Religion and for your Friend, to advertise him gently of his past misconduct, and to prevail with him, if you can, to proceed upon better measures for the future. Which as it will do him greater credit, and no disservice to his cause, may tend to give him and yourself more satisfaction upon review, and do more real benefit to the Public, and to the Church of Christ, than the measures in which he has hitherto chosen to proceed.

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If this request be a reasonable one, it is hoped you will comply with it. The presenting of it, you see, is done with no design, nor with the least wish, to discourage this worthy author, from pursuing an attempt which may appear to him so laudable (an attempt, in his judgment, to rescue truth from a supposed injury, and to do real service, we presume, to Religion;) but to dissuade him, if possible, from an unworthy manner of pursuing it, and to put him more upon his guard hereafter, that he may give less provocation, where none hath been given; and treat others with that decency, with which he himself would be treated.

As to the Argument itself, he is heartily welcome to go on with it. He is desired, he is importuned (if importunity be necessary) to carry it farther, as he hath promised. Truth, on which side soever it lies, is of that great importance, that it ought to be discussed: And all who are Friends to it, will always wish that it may be examined, and examined to the bottom; that it may in time appear; and that the public may form a judgment upon it. But the discussion of Truth obliges no man to be uncivil. Its interest doth not require it. The cause of it is better served by Argument, than by Passion; and where Argument fails, the rest is to no purpose.

Had those who take the liberty to address this letter to you in public, known how to do it in a more private manner, it would have given more content to them, as they suppose it might have done to you. They can only follow the direction which your Friend hath given: And if He is excusable in addressing you publicly, they hope that they are no less so, upon an occasion perhaps more urgent. The respect due to your character, as this Gentleman hath represented it, is most sincerely paid you by, &c.

NUMB.

NUMBER VII.

Some gentle expostulations with Opponents, &c.

THE *free and candid Disquisitions* have now for some time lain before the public ; and mens Opinions about them, on the one hand and the other, may be suppoed to be pretty well settled. As we have no right to judge for any but ourselves, we leave such Opinions, together with our treatise, to stand or fall, as just reason shall determine ; having only this to say, that if it has not truth to support, and good manners to recommend it, we can wish it no success, nor can we expect it will receive any approbation from the public. But if it stands upon reason, and is managed with decency, sobriety and truth, we cannot be so little concerned for its success, as not to wish it the greatest ; nor for its treatment in the world, as not to desire it may be a civil and a candid one. Which yet the Prejudices of men, numerous and prevalent as they are, give us but little reason to promise ourselves ; and provided we meet with fewer of the bad effects of them, than those have done who have gone before us upon this difficult subject, we shall think ourselves not unfavorably dealt with.

Having seen some instances, perhaps not a few, of what we judge to be unhandsome treatment, in regard to the proposals we have advanced, and apprehending more of that kind from the various adversaries of our cause ; we judge it proper to expostulate with them a little upon the occasion, before they proceed any further ; and to lay before them some considerations, which if duly attended to, may at least abate their virulence, if not wholly remove their

their prejudices. With this view we would propose to them the following queries.

Gentlemen :

1. Are you serious? Have you maturely considered the Christian Religion, and its great and noble purposes?—Do you really believe it is for the interest of this religion to oppose the design of a review? and that it is for its disadvantage to promote it?—Ask yourselves, impartially, why, or for what reason is it, that you would oppose such a design? For private interest, or for public benefit? For the glory of God, and the advancement of his kingdom; or out of private spleen, rooted prejudice, and a narrow party-spirit?—To determine this in some measure; can you seriously and earnestly *pray* to God to *defeat* this cause, as *we* do seriously and earnestly every day of our lives, pray to him to *prosper* it? persuaded as we are from our hearts, that it is his cause, which *you* (we believe) cannot so reasonably be, that *yours* is. Nothing could have supported *us*, under your multiplied obloquies and oppositions, and the discouragements we receive from some of those who should know and act better than you do, but this firm persuasion of mind, and the testimony of a good conscience within us, that we are endeavouring in the integrity of our hearts, to do service to the religion of Christ, and using the best means in our power towards the advancement of it in his Church established in these Kingdoms. When you consider again, which we desire and hope you will do, whether you can *heartily pray against* us, and our endeavours in this way; this, if any thing, will probably cast a damp upon your spirits, and make you less forward than you have hitherto been, in opposing a cause, which for ought you know, or can sufficiently prove, may
be

be the cause of God, and which you may have more than reason to suspect, if you consider well, is really and truly his.

2. In your speculations upon this subject, the great point to be considered is this; *Are these things so*, as we have represented them, or are they not? If they are not, disprove us: If they are, confess so much, and join with us in petitioning our Governors that they may be amended.——If *you* apprehend things in a different light from what *we* do, and other men probably will, it is reasonable you should make your objections; and considering the Importance of the subject, you ought in conscience to make them. But then, does this oblige you to make them in an unhandsome manner, and to urge them with acrimony and bitterness?——Write like Gentlemen, Scholars, and Christians, and you are welcome to oppose us all you can, if you think it will be for the interest of truth and piety to hinder the success of our application.

3. Before you engage any further in your observations and answers, will you be so kind to yourselves, and so just to your subject and to us, as with due seriousness to consider what we have offered, in several parts of our treatise, relating to *a calm, a candid, and a rational examination of the points in question*? It is to be hoped you will not overlook what you have there been so frequently and so amiably reminded of. If you do, let not *us* bear the blame of any fallies of your passion: Which we have endeavoured, as far as lay in our power, to prevent. If we have given you or the public any just offence, we have declared over and over (and perhaps much more than we needed) that it was contrary to our intention; and we are still willing to retract, whatever shall be found grating to a serious, a judicious, and a good mind. Can *you*,
laying

laying your hands upon your hearts, say the same, with regard to what you have written, or shall write, upon the subject? Review your Writings again, and consider about what you shall write hereafter. The public peace is a point of greater moment, than to be sacrificed to the passions of private men; and men of sense will think their time more valuable, than to throw it away in reading, what is so little edifying and so foreign to the merits of the cause, *viz.* hard names, obloquy, and railing. If you are resolved to write on, can you, and will you prevail with yourselves to do this one thing? Consult the honor of religion, and the peace and edification of the Church: Which controversial heat and the violence of party-spirit, never will promote, but which gentleness and good-nature will.

4. Have you taken as much *time to consider* upon the subject, as the authors of the *Disquisitions* have done? who have bestowed several years in observing and examining with seriousness, before they would offer to publish their thoughts. They do by no means think that they are without error; but can truly say, that they do not err wilfully: Which would be an unpardonable crime. If you should happen to espy any error in their writings (as no doubt you are not unwilling to do, if you find any room) will you take the utmost advantage you can, of their oversights? Will you triumph unmercifully on the supposed discovery, and condemn the whole, on the account of some slips? Or will you flatter yourselves that the whole Kingdom will join with you, in setting all aside, because there may be some mistakes, upon which you can exercise your dexterity in dispute, and display a little critical skill?—Your work is not yet done, when you have done all you can, in such an ungenerous
method

method of proceeding. With all your endeavours, you will not be able to shew, that there is no need of a reformation. Common reason and sense, and the judgment of so many learned men, at least equal to yourselves in every valuable accomplishment, will still be against you. Get over these difficulties as you can. We wait the issue, without impatience or fear.

Lastly, why will you, or how can you, be angry with a set of Writers, who have used all the *precaution* that was possible, to avoid giving offence? Could any thing have been more expressive of care and tenderness in this matter, than the deliberation they used, and the method they took in addressing, *before* they published? Which failing of success, yet still they would not publish, but waited some years, revised their work, examined it again and again, submitted it to the examination of others, advised with them upon the subject, yielded to almost every alteration that was proposed, even where their own judgment lay another way; and after all, did with some reluctance, and no small anxiety about the event, commit their work to the press: And even there, after some sheets were printed off, they put a stop to it for some time (a method very unusual, and many times very detrimental in such cases) as apprehending that some *prelude* was necessary, to take off the edge of prejudice, and pave the way more gradually for its reception. If any thing more could have been done for this vineyard of the Church of England, than hath been done by these authors in its favour, let the World now speak. They have their case truly represented, and their complaints fully laid open. Be not then angry without a cause with your Brethren. Be not over-hasty in condemning; lest in so doing you condemn yourselves, more than you can in justice condemn these
these

these authors. If you proceed to condemn them, they appeal to a higher and more equitable Tribunal; where friends to truth will be justified, and the opposers of truth will be condemned.

Farther expostulations upon the subject, addressed to the same persons.

1. What harm can a reformation do to the Church of England? Why are you then so eager in opposing it? Will it be better for the Church, that it should continue in its present condition, disordered and diseased? wasting and decaying? Consider seriously about this, and then oppose her reformation.

2. Do you take the right measures in managing your cause, and in opposing ours? What is your principal work therein? The Disquisitions dwell chiefly upon the allegation of *facts*, and argue from thence for the necessity of a reformation. If you would do any thing to the purpose, you must disprove the facts first. Let us see how handsomely you can acquit yourselves on this head. Try your skill and your strength here, before you go any farther; and then we will readily attend you into the discussion of *other* matters. Till then, you will not give us any high opinion either of the merits of your cause, or of your abilities to defend it. There is work enough cut out for you in this single article: And you will probably be presented with more still of this kind, in another Volume of Disquisitions. Whatever opinion we may have of your abilities, we do not imagine you can do much here; or that, if haply you should succeed in removing one mountain, you will be able to remove all. However, success attend you in every honest inquiry after truth.

3. You

3. You seem, Gentlemen, to have a Notion prevailing amongst you, which, if it be a just one, must necessarily bar the way to all reformation, viz. that every thing established by law is right, or at least ought not to be controverted by inferiors. Pray, why not, if any thing so established should happen to be wrong? And why may not some things established by law, be wrong, as well as some that are not established? No human legislature, that we know of, at least none of a secular nature, claims the privilege of being infallible; nor consequently insists that its decrees are irreversibile, or denies the privilege of seeking, upon just occasions, for amendments of what may be wrong, and may therefore want to be rectified. Why may not things be sometimes amiss in the Church, as well as in the State? You will not say that the Church is infallible, any more than the State; and our own Church in particular (as we have often intimated, and as you very well know) is so just and so reasonable, as to allow that neither her determinations nor her prescripts, of any sort, are of that high authority as to be incontestable, nor of that invariable excellency as to be incapable of amendment. And what is more; experience shews us, in numberless instances, that things well established at first do afterwards, in a course of time, want to be revised. Nor is it possible so far to guard against the alterations that time will make, in the best constitutions, as not still to leave it necessary, even absolutely necessary, at certain periods, to apply a remedy; else the constitution must fail, and will at length, of its own accord, run to ruin. Whether this be the case at present with our ecclesiastical establishment, may, we presume, be judged, with some degree of clearness and certainty, by what we have offered in the *Disquisitions* upon this subject.

If

If what we have suggested therein be right, surely your Notion above alluded to, must be wrong; and consequently your opposing a reformation unjust.—To give you one short and serious caution: Take heed, friends, that you may not be undoing the Church, whilst you think you are supporting it; and demolishing with one hand, what you would secure with the other. According to *our* apprehensions of things, you are taking the ready course to entail incumbrances upon the Church; and, whether you may be aware of it or no, to bring popery back into this our Zion, and together with it, slavery into the Nation. We do not say, we do not think, we shall not once suppose or imagine, that this is your design. We are persuaded of the contrary; or at least charity persuades us to hope the best of you in this respect. Nevertheless, looking forward, and surveying the necessary tendency of things, we cannot but forewarn you of the consequences we foresee. And they are indeed dreadful ones, if you persist in your obstinate adherence to things as they are at present, and refuse your assent to their being made better.—In short, your hasty and injudicious zeal to justify the present disorders in the Church, and to continue them, is the way to increase them; and thus by degrees (but late may the period be, e'er you can effect this!) you will be sure to bring your favourite establishment to a level with the ground.

4. It is common with you to insinuate (in order to raise prejudice, as we suppose) that the Disquisitions have done dishonor to the Church, and therefore you are resolved to give them no quarter. That they have done the Church dishonor, we cannot allow, nor consequently that the resolution you form is a just one. We are rather inclined to think, that the method you take in opposing those

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Disquisitions,

Disquisitions, is the sure way to do dishonor both to the Church and to yourselves. For what are you doing all the while? Only using insufficient arguments to keep the Church from being reformed, when it manifestly wants reformation. Is this either for *her* credit, or your *own*?

5. Therefore, if you can clearly shew, and solidly prove, that the Disquisitions, instead of doing that *good*, for which they were intended, are more likely to do that *hurt*, for which they were *not* intended; you may depend upon it, that the authors will never more abet them, nor wish any others to do so. But they believe you will find it a hard task to make out that point; and that others will find it a much easier one to make out the contrary. — If disturbances or altercations should at any time hereafter arise, in consequence of this address, the discerning part of mankind will know where to lay the blame, and will probably lay it, not on those who represent the truth with mildness, and desire a redress of grievances with peaceableness, but on those who oppose both with eagerness, and instead of endeavouring to remove mens prejudices by sober applications, strive to heighten them by opposite methods: Which have hitherto been the chief means of hindering the progress of truth and reformation, and of fomenting instead of composing differences between his majesty's protestant subjects. It will become you then, Gentlemen, if you are friends to truth and peace, to keep a watch upon your temper and conduct, in the management of this very important affair; and to take heed that you be not accessory to the doing of that *harm* yourselves, which you seem to be so forward to charge on others.

6. In arguing upon the present question, it is reasonable to expect, that you will not stretch any
advantage

advantage you may be possessed of, beyond just bounds, nor employ it to enforce your cause, when you cannot invalidate that which you are opposing. *You* have, it is certain, an advantage in one respect on *your* side, which *we* have not, nor do pretend to have on *ours*. Such things as we desire may be rectified, are at present (some or other, but not all of them) confirmed by *law*. You will without doubt, discern and improve this advantage; and will probably have numbers to join with you; some out of inherent prejudice against all alterations, how reasonable or how necessary soever; others out of interest, and because they see yours is the safer as well as more profitable side to close with. Having then this advantage (which we do not in the least envy you) act like men of generosity, and use your advantage with moderation. Do not inflame the populace, nor by ungenerous methods expose us to the effects of their resentment. Argue the matter coolly and fairly, and then let it have its proper effect upon the minds of your readers. We assure you, brethren, that we differ from you in our sentiments, with much unwillingness, and with a very serious and just concern upon our minds. If the force of truth, and the evidence of reason, did not convince us of the necessity of a reformation (a necessity too visible, and fairly acknowledged by many) you would have found on *our* part, no opponents to contend with, and might have enjoyed all the ease and comfort which we wish to you, as much as we do to ourselves, in a life free from controversy, and all unnecessary debate.

Lastly, to convince you, Gentlemen, that we are desirous of peace and love, and that both may be continued and improved amongst all the members of the Church, we will here make you one

fair proposal : We invite you to a free, a candid, and friendly debate upon the subject, *i. e.* to a calm, a just, and impartial examination of it. We call upon you, we exhort you, we even challenge you to this. Close with us if you please, upon these terms, and get the better of us, if you can ; which we shall never repine at. For we desire, not victory, but truth ; and that joined with peace and good manners. After this open proposal, and amicable challenge, we cannot but flatter ourselves that you will think it beneath you to stoop to any of the common but low and ungenerous methods of controversy.—Let it then be seen for once, that this controversy is at least *capable* of being better managed, than it has usually been ; and let it be said hereafter, for the honour of the present age, that it *has* been so managed upon this occasion ; when a set of men of friendly and peaceable dispositions, on each side of the question, have as it were amicably agreed, to make a free and dispassionate inquiry upon the subject, and to represent the whole in the fairest manner to the view of the public, in order to find out truth, and, if possible, to get it duly established in the end.

N U M B. VIII.

IT requires a good deal of patience, and great evenness and steadiness of mind, to be able to bear, with a proper demeanor, the various oppositions and insults, which the authors of some late free and candid inquiries, upon a subject of consequence, have met with from their countrymen. We have hitherto borne all with as much equanimity and long-suffering as we well could ; and do hope in God that he will enable us to do the same for the future ; even tho' we should be used still worse than we have been.

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If ever we give the least indulgence to passion, or prejudice, or resentment, or throw out an angry word, upon this important occasion, we are free to condemn it (as improper for such a subject) as soon as we are convinced of it; and are desirous to be forgiven, as we would forgive others; having no other interest or view in the world (we seriously and solemnly declare it, as we have done over and over, and will do to the end) but to promote the Christian cause; a cause more valuable and dear to us, than any that this world can propound to our esteem and attachment.

Men of serious tempers, and impartial honesty, sufficiently acquainted with our treatise, but not acquainted with the opposition made to it, will hardly be able to imagine in what manner we have been treated by those Gentlemen who have thought fit to appear against us. We think indeed that many of them have done it to their shame, and to our credit. But be that as it will; we are desirous to give one sample of their common manner of treating us, that the world may judge. We are not ashamed of any obloquies that are cast upon us, but freely produce them; as believing them all to be undeserved, and consequently not able to do us the least harm, or to prejudice any sober persons against our cause. Here is one little specimen of controversial civility now at hand, which seems to be no way deficient in the turns, and terms, and temper so familiar to our adversaries. We take it as it lies before us in one of the miscellanies published for the month of *March*, 1750; taking the liberty to insert here and there a few clauses of our own, as occasion may require; and at the same time begging the author's pardon, if he thinks it a wrong done him, that we re-publish without his approbation, what he hath published.

lished (which he had certainly a right to do) without ours.

To the proprietors of the *Universal Magazine*.

Gentlemen,

*Hunc solem, & stellas, & decedentia certis
Tempora momentis, sunt qui formidine nullâ
Imbuti spectant.*

Hor.

‘ **A**S you have favoured us with the remarks of
‘ a learned man, on the famous pamphlet,
‘ called, *Free and candid Disquisitions*, relating to al-
‘ tering our *Liturgy*; I beg leave to offer to the
‘ public a few observations also on that wonderful
‘ performance, to save the concealed writers of it
‘ the pains of any more defences of that work; as
‘ our *divine Liturgy* is proof against all their low
‘ arts and subtle contrivances.

‘ We allow, that if the most laboured pretences
‘ to an uncommon share of modesty and candor
‘ would alone set off any book, this of our new
‘ reformers stands as fair for a kind reception from
‘ the world as any I have seen. But, alas! tho’
‘ almost every page of *Free and candid Disquisitions*
‘ is full of the merits and modesty of this great
‘ undertaking, and all insinuating complements to
‘ their readers; yet the cobweb is so thin, that few
‘ have been caught in it, but those who were before
‘ secret enemies to our church, or our professed and
‘ fairer adversaries of every sort, who have exclud-
‘ ed themselves long since from the pale of the *Eng-
‘ lish* church. The observation is universal, that the
‘ grand interest of these writers is this, to give us
‘ an intire new, and no doubt, a polite *Liturgy*,
‘ perfectly adapted to the more refined taste of the
‘ Dis-

‘ Dissenters ; FOR whatever reports have been spread
 ‘ industriously about, that some very eminent Dig-
 ‘ nitaries in our church were concerned in *these Dis-*
 ‘ *quisitions*, it is believed by all men of sense and
 ‘ judgment, that *no* such worthy persons have had
 ‘ any hand in it’ [*in these same Disquisitions, just*
 ‘ *mentioned above, it is presumed he means ;*] ‘ as they
 ‘ give no encouragement to it.’ [*Which assertion,*
 ‘ *nevertheless, may admit of some fair abatement.*] On
 ‘ the contrary, it is well known, that this attempt
 ‘ of altering our Common-Prayers has had the
 ‘ fewest patrons among the worthy Clergy, as well
 ‘ as among our reverend and illustrious Governors
 ‘ in church and state, that perhaps any other scheme
 ‘ ever met with, that has been thus publickly offer-
 ‘ ed to them. And indeed how could it be other-
 ‘ wise expected ; when this scheme of making such
 ‘ *absurd and infinite questions*, relating to every one
 ‘ of the *offices* of our Common-Prayer, is in *direct*
 ‘ violation of his Majesty’s most excellent and sa-
 ‘ cred declaration prefixt to the 39 *Articles* in our
 ‘ Prayer-books ; which these very modest reformers
 ‘ will do well to peruse attentively.’ [*Which hav-*
 ‘ *ing done long before, they modestly presume to recom-*
 ‘ *mend to this Gentleman to do ; having some reason to*
 ‘ *believe that he also in his turn, will do well to peruse*
 ‘ *that declaration a little more attentively than he ap-*
 ‘ *pears to have yet done.*]

‘ His Majesty has in that declaration, with the
 ‘ wisdom and goodness becoming his sacred office,
 ‘ openly forbid all future differences about the *arti-*
 ‘ *cles* [N. B. *Not a word there about the offices*]
 ‘ of the church ; and [*has expressly assured us*] that
 ‘ he will not suffer any the least varying or depart-
 ‘ ing in any degree from the *doctrine and discipline*
 ‘ of the church [*the only things which the declaration*
 ‘ *takes notice of*] as now established. His Majesty

‘ farther graciously declares, that he takes comfort
 ‘ in this, that ALL his Clergy have ever [*most will-*
 ‘ *ingly*] subscribed to these articles.’ [Our Clergy
 ‘ *generally* have subscribed, *says the declaration else-*
 ‘ *where* ;] ‘ and that whatever curious and unhappy
 ‘ differences might exercise the church of Christ in
 ‘ past ages, he commands all farther curious search
 ‘ and disputes touching the *articles* of our church
 ‘ to be *for ever* laid aside, on pain of his royal dis-
 ‘ pleasure, and the censure of the *Commission Eccle-*
 ‘ *siastical*. These and the many other tenderly and
 ‘ strong [ly] expressed resolutions in this royal de-
 ‘ claration, to conserve and maintain the unity of
 ‘ the church in the bond of peace, and not to suffer
 ‘ unnecessary disputations, alterations *, or questions
 ‘ to be raised, which may nourish factions in church
 ‘ or state ; one would think should have prevented
 ‘ so many *new* and *trifling* queries, as are raised up
 ‘ against our Liturgy in almost every page of *Free*
 ‘ *and candid Disquisitions*.’ [Q. Was the word *new*
 ‘ advisedly put in ? However, this is the common
 ‘ opinion ; viz. that many of the observations are
 ‘ *new*.—If they are *just*, that is sufficient.]

‘ But to come to the point, what are the mighty
 ‘ faults and blemishes which our reformers have
 ‘ discovered in our present *admirable Liturgy* ?
 ‘ That can warrant a review of it, and such a re-
 ‘ view as would make it quite a *new* one ; of the
 ‘ excellency of which new form of theirs, how-
 ‘ ever, they have not favoured us with one speci-
 ‘ men. Why truly, the best and only objections to
 ‘ it, that I can discern thro’ the whole pamphlet,

* In the declaration itself it is *altercations* ; a word, though
 similar in sound and in spelling, yet widely different in sense,
 from *alterations* : which on the present occasion may be thought
 to carry too invidious an aspect, to let us suppose that the writer
 intended to give the former word such an ill turn.

' are these. 1. Our morning-service is too tedious
 ' on Sundays, for some hasty curates who serve 4
 ' or 5 churches or chapels in a day, and for super-
 ' annuated incumbents, whose lungs will not go
 ' through it. The second grand objection is no less
 ' than to the repetition of our *Lord's* own *Prayer* ;
 ' which they presume to think is done too often in
 ' our morning-service ; which objection has so little
 ' of religion in it, that I leave it to the excellence
 ' of that most divine of all prayers to speak for it-
 ' self. They object, thirdly, to the repetitions of
 ' the *doxology*, and to the choice and order of our
 ' *Lessons* and *Psalms*, for festivals, fasts, and other
 ' days ; but offer no particular amendments instead
 ' of it.' [*What this, It means, we do not readily un-*
derstand ; but we have offered what we judged proper
with regard to each of these articles.] ' Fourthly,
 ' they allow, in general, very often, that all the
 ' parts and offices of our Liturgy have something in
 ' them very worthy of all praise and reverence ; and
 ' yet (as if they were doomed to confute them-
 ' selves) they in the same breath, raise so many little
 ' cavils and idle queries to those very offices they
 ' [had] before commended ; and all this, according
 ' to their usual custom, without offering any thing
 ' of their own more refined composing in the room
 ' of it ;' [*Does he still mean, of those very offices ?*
 '—*A moot case ; inasmuch*] ' that no one can easily
 ' guess at any meaning at all by such insignificant
 ' insinuations. These and many other such frivo-
 ' lous queries swell up this important work, and
 ' their late defence of it' [*which, by the way, they*
 ' *know nothing of, nor have ever heard of ;*] that I
 ' don't wonder it meets with no regard in the least
 ' amongst the truly learned and good men in this
 ' age, of whom, we thank God, there is still a suf-
 ' ficient

‘ ficient number left in this nation to silence all such gainfayers, and innovating practices.

‘ And now for a word of *advice* to our reformers, and so I shall dismiss them and their disquisitions with all temper and charity, like a true son of the church of *England* by law established, as I hope they are. As they have ransacked every eminent writer we have, for every minute expression that has any the most distant relation to a review of our Liturgy; so I desire they would, out of their great modesty, also reflect on the infinitely greater number of passages, in which all writers of distinction have given the highest applauses to our present *Divine Liturgy*. I shall single out our most incomparable authors on this very subject, the Rev. Dr. *Comber* and Mr. *Wheatly*; both of whom, in their immortal works, have shewn the consummate wisdom, piety, and true spirit of primitive Christianity, which breathes throughout our Liturgy, which is *all glorious within and without* *. It has already lasted us for ages with very few amendments, tho’ so often examined, and that by as learned and good men as any in the world: And not only all the shining list of British Prelates and illustrious Philosophers, [Q. *What Philosophers in particular, can be supposed to be here meant?*] but even the best foreign reformed authors, have ALL owned and admired the *beauty of holiness* to be met with in the British Liturgy.

* It might perhaps have been somewhat difficult to guess what this writer should mean by the *external* glory of our Liturgy, if another equally zealous had not more lately given us the following account of what he assures us he had sometime before seen in a *vision*. ‘ On a sudden, with extended arms, DEVOTION held up on high the book of COMMON-PRAYER. The *Covers* of it were adamant; — the *Leaves* were of ivory; the *Letters* were of gold.’

‘ And

‘ And here, to be impartial to ourselves, I wish I
 ‘ could say the same of our *lives* and *practices*’ [*per-*
haps Mr. White, a late advocate for both, may be able
to say something on this head, that will give our au-
thor satisfaction :] ‘ these indeed want reviewing
 ‘ every moment, and, if our reformers had spent
 ‘ their disquisitions here, I had thanked them much.’
 [They flatter themselves that they have not been want-
 ing in their part towards this, and that they have laid
 a proper foundation for it, in this very work ; yet nei-
 ther expecting nor desiring any thanks for what they
 have done ; being sufficiently satisfied with the testimony
 of a good conscience, that they have done the best in
 their power towards promoting a general Reforma-
 tion.]

‘ Our *lives* therefore we should each of us be the
 ‘ severest critics upon, which will be very good ones,
 ‘ if they are suitable to our daily prayers : but alas !
 ‘ I fear the *former* will not bear the most cold scru-
 ‘ tiny, whilst the *latter* will stand the test of MEN
 ‘ and ANGELS *. In a word, by God’s blessing,
 ‘ the *glorious* Liturgy of the Church of *England*
 ‘ shall remain for ever the monument of the devo-
 ‘ tion and solid virtue of our wise ancestors, and a
 ‘ fair example to every succeeding generation, till
 ‘ the consummation of all things. I am,

Gentlemen, &c.

Wootton, Dec.

30, 1749.

Eugenio.*

These are the observations of this Gentleman, as
 he himself hath exhibited them to the Public ; and

* An old stretch of vaunting, common enough in the last
 century, when men were immoderately lavish on such topics of
 praise and defiance. See *Appeal to common reason and candor*
 (part I.) Numb. V. p. 38.

this

this is the common manner of opposing us, as used by the rest of our adversaries. Their illiberal treatment hath no other effect upon us, than to make us heartily pity and pray for them, as we daily do; hoping they may return by degrees to a better mind. However loth we are to touch further upon this Letter, we shall add a few observations more.—

1st, Is it not some disadvantage to the cause of an opponent, to write with less accuracy, and with less knowledge than he ought to have, of the subject he treats upon? We apprehend this to be the case here.

— 2. If the candor, which this Gentleman seems not very willing to allow us, did not forbid, we should have been apt to suspect that the foregoing, like several other bolts of the same kind, that have lately been shot out against us, had come from one of those busy agents in disguise, who are labouring all they can to prevent a reformation in *our* Church, lest it should prove fatal, as many apprehend it will, to the interest of their *own*. But we would hope that at *Wootton*, all are Protestants, tho' one of the inhabitants may appear to be too fond of a cause, which is opposite to the first principles of our *English* reformation.— 3. The *motto* prefixt to this paper (like many more that have with equal judgment and candor been prefixt to others) seems to be suitable only to men of atheistical principles; and may be designed by the writer to represent *us* as such. To which we shall make no other answer, but that we forgive him. — 4. If by *his Majesty's declaration* he means (as he plainly does) his present Majesty King *George* the second, whom God long preserve to be a blessing to this Church and Nation, we need not intimate to the learned, how superficially he has inquired, and how egregiously he is mistaken. The honour due to K. *James* I. should be freely allowed him; and no offence, we are sure, will be taken by his

his present Majesty, nor the least dishonour done him, by giving his ancestor a right, which he himself lays no claim to.—5. Since the declaration happens to mention a *commission ecclesiastical*, as subsisting in some former reigns, this writer, without the least hesitation or diffidence, speaks of it as *Now* subsisting, tho' (unhappily perhaps for him, but happily for the Nation) it doth not now subsist, nor hath done, God be thanked, for more than half a century past.—6. To touch again briefly upon the subject of a former remark, we cannot without concern observe, how unjustly we are charged in this letter, with a late *defence* and even *defences* of our work. This Gentleman must be superlatively knowing, to know more of what we have done, than we ourselves do: or else has an uncommon share of assurance, to assert so positively, what he does not know. If any such defence or defences were made, as this Gentleman supposes, or rather confidently asserts, he must find out the authors, and may chastise them if he pleases. *We* had no hand in them. Nor were we concerned in the many papers that have been written pro and con upon the subject; always chusing to decline controversy, and contenting ourselves with what we had done; as being very sure that the *Disquisitions* could speak sufficiently for themselves, to all that would hear and understand; which we make no doubt but the *Appeal* will also do, to men of reason and candor, to whom it is principally directed. One very civil and serious paper, drawn up by a well-wisher to our design, was indeed permitted to go to the press, with the privacy and approbation of one or more of our number; but then this was subsequent to the date of *Eugenio's* letter, and therefore could not be one of the defences he alludes to, whatever they were, if any at all; for which we are obliged to acquiesce in his word.

There

There was also an *Apology* (a sensible and a just one) after this, made in the behalf of the authors of the *Disquisitions*: But this apology was never seen by those authors (or by any one of them, that we can yet find) before it was published: And then it was approved of; and the writer of it has now their thanks, for a favour so generously bestowed upon injured friends to religion, and to the public happiness.—Lastly, This adverse Gentleman, upon seeing so many errors either of his pen, or memory, or discernment, or judgment, has this intimation and opportunity given him, to revise and correct them: which it is hoped he will do, at fuller leisure, and in a calmer humour, than when he wrote at first. He may judge it prudent to inquire further, and consider better, before he writes again upon such a subject, and before he takes the liberty to condemn persons, with whose character he is as unacquainted, as he seems to be with the cause he has undertaken to defend; lest he should be reminded by some others, tho' not by us, of a character which he may not approve of, and be directed to apply it to himself, as pointed out in that passage, which speaks of those who *rage* and are *confident* *.

We shall only add further, that it would be the easiest thing in the world to answer and refute, upon the foundation of truth and reason, all other opponents, in the same manner that we have done this Gentleman, if we had a mind to it. But we delight not in such diversions from our main design; and shall therefore, according to our first resolution, be as sparing as possible in making any remonstrances of this kind. The present papers are made public, on purpose to clear truth, and satisfy

* Prov. xiv. 16.

those who are willing to be satisfied, on having a just account of real facts.

Aug. 1750.

N U M B. IX.

Gentlemen,

SINCE your *Disquisitions* first came out, I have been a diligent examiner of every thing that hath been published, on each side of this important question. I observed, with many, that your proposals seemed to be very reasonable, and therefore flattered myself that little or no objection could be made to them. And since you had offered your sentiments with much mildness and decency, and had also invited men to a fair and sober examination, I could not at first imagine, that any could have the confidence to oppose you, in terms less mild and less decent than your own. I began therefore to expect, that we should have this controversy handled, if handled at all, in a new and more reputable manner, than had hitherto been usual upon such a subject. But to my concern I found myself mistaken, and very soon. Your frequent and benevolent remonstrances, against an unworthy manner of conducting such a dispute, had no effect. The men of the old leaven continue to shew the old Spleen, and are nothing moved by your remonstrances, nor will hear the voice of any charmers, charm they never so wisely. This, unhappily, is a subject of a very peculiar nature; particularly adapted to raise spleen, where there are any seeds of it remaining in the old mortal. If even Angels were to write upon it, they would not fail of meeting with opposition: Nay, I am confident they would be even ridiculed and contemned, if they were not known to be the authors.

It

It is impossible to escape censure upon such a theme, or to meet with any thing like candor from those, who are strangers to this heavenly temper.—This, my Brethren, has been your case. You have not only been opposed, but opposed without temper, as well as without reason. I am sorry to see so much malignity among men; so much inveteracy among Christians; so little regard paid to the honour of our religion, to common decency, to repeated requests, to sobriety and candor, to reason and sense.

But be easy. Go on with your endeavours, and in the same way. Your opponents having overlooked so many invitations to peace, and to a free and candid examination of this subject, I have a mind to look back upon your performance, and to draw from thence some applications, which may possibly convince the world (the unprejudiced part of it at least) that you deserved a fairer treatment, and that if any thing could have been done on your part, to prevent the old splenetic and irreligious zeal of the common disputers of this world, you have fairly done it, and could do no more. For their manner of treating you, they are to answer. You can only answer for your own conduct.

Let us look into the book, and examin the matter, with impartiality.

There is something to prevail with men to be fair and reasonable in the *Preface*. And there one would expect to see some indications of your spirit, at your first setting out; or, however, of that of your Friends, who have made your cause their own, and by approving your temper and conduct (as well, I think, they might) have made it reasonable to judge that they are of the same turn of mind themselves, and wish all others to be so, in considering this important subject.

‘ The

‘ The authors (who have long made just observations upon the tempers and prejudices of men) seem to have used such a conduct in their way and manner of application, that, as it cannot justly irritate, so may it by degrees be attended with good effect, by opening the way to a more free and more candid examination of things, than hath yet been usual ; since both on the one side and the other, the parties that have contended about these matters, have commonly discovered but too visible a partiality to their respective tenets and interests. — Were all men of letters, what they ought to be, calm and dispassionate, ingenuous and candid, the authors, we believe, would not hesitate a moment to set their names to the work,’ &c. *Pref.* p. ix, x. (*ed.* 2.)

In your own *Advertisement*, immediately subjoined to that preface, — ‘ If we have treated the subject with all the caution, all the calmness, and all the tenderness that was in our power (which we can truly say we have endeavoured to do in every part of our address) we entertain hopes that we shall ourselves meet with no other than a calm, a tender, and favourable treatment, from all unprejudiced minds’ [Which in fact has been your happiness hitherto ;] ‘ and that, where any shall entertain different sentiments from those we have offered, they will be content to enjoy them, without inveighing against us : Who, in what we have attempted, have done no other injury to them, or to the world, than this ; that we have fairly and ingenuously delivered our own thoughts ; and those thoughts lie before them and the world to judge of. — The common methods of invective and contempt, as they are very improper upon any *serious* subject, will be more so upon this, if we have been serious in the management of it, and

H

‘ paid

' paid all due regard to those we apply to. Nothing
 ' of this low kind, we are sure, will fall from our
 ' Governors, or from any other persons of educa-
 ' tion and learning.—We conceive just hopes of
 ' our equals, brethren, and governors, that having
 ' the honour of God, and the welfare of this church,
 ' principally in their view, they will cordially con-
 ' cur in all proper measures to advance both ; and,
 ' by their pious and prudent management, prevent
 ' all unnecessary debates : which the present attempt
 ' is sincerely calculated, as well to prevent, as to
 ' render needless for the future. Nor do we know
 ' of any other method more likely (under the blef-
 ' sing of Heaven) to settle the peace of the Church,
 ' and the satisfaction of all who are considerate, in-
 ' telligent, and unprejudiced in her communion,
 ' than this we have taken.'

— Again : ' As for ourselves, we desire to
 ' write like men of ingenuity and liberal education ;
 ' and, if we may be allowed the favor, to be an-
 ' swered by such as are happy in both, and can
 ' shew their ingenuity and breeding by their writing.
 ' If answered by persons of a different character, we
 ' can, and probably shall, shew our sentiments of
 ' them and their writings, by our *silence* only ; free-
 ' ly leaving the public to judge between them and
 ' us both as to the merits of the cause of each, and
 ' of the manner in which each have written.'

The *note* you have subjoined to p. xiv. of this
 advertisement, surely deserved some notice from
 your waspish adversaries. It is a wonder they could
 overlook, or disregard, so many noble sentiments as
 are there set down, from several valuable writers of
 our Church, and even from the writings of the
 Church herself. What can be more fine, or more
 engaging and affecting in the present case, than the
 wish or prayer of Dr. *Hody*, which you have exhi-
 bited

bited in that Note? You have, it is true, giving it only in *Latin*, being the language in which he had penned it. But that seems to be no just reason for its being past over without attention, by those who understand that language. I am tempted, for the sake of those who do not, to put it into plain *English*. ‘ God grant (says he) that for my own part, ‘ I may either remain in the obscurity of eternal silence, among those who never write at all; or else ‘ write, whenever occasion calls upon me, in a ‘ manner becoming a man of ingenuity, of liberal ‘ and generous education; and a lover of true philosophy: That in my researches, I may have ‘ Truth only in my view; not indulging the least ‘ acrimony of style; being mild, courteous, candid; and so far from an inclination to vent any ‘ thing that is opprobrious or unbecoming, as that ‘ nothing shall ever move or tempt me, to stoop to ‘ so mean a practice!’ Your observation upon this admirable soliloquy is a very just one, and ought to be subjoined here, as it is in your book. ‘ Were ‘ the Christian world so happy as to abound with ‘ men of this turn of thought, and this temper of ‘ mind (and oh that the glorious day were once ‘ come!) controversies would soon be at an end; or ‘ else would be managed with that decency, and ‘ candor, and mutual respect, which, instead of ‘ making the writings on such subjects to be the most ‘ disagreeable and hurtful, would render them perhaps some of the most entertaining and most useful of all sorts of writings.—Want of temper, want ‘ of judgment, want of a just knowledge of the ‘ world, and of just observations on mankind; and ‘ above all, want of the true spirit of Christianity, ‘ and of an enlarged view of its great design, is the ‘ grand obstacle which hinders such a noble way of ‘ thinking and writing from entering into the world:

‘ ——— *which would be a means* to clear up truth, and
‘ make it appear amiable in the eyes of men.’

That pathetic wish of Mr. *Veneer*, which you have set down in the same note, deserved also to have been regarded. ‘ O that God would let me see
‘ day, when men will endeavour not to defend their
‘ own notions obstinately and perversely, but to do
‘ their utmost, in a calm and unprejudiced manner,
‘ to find out truth, and to secure the peace of the
‘ Church and Nation *, and in a word, when they
‘ shall study, not the interest of this or that party,
‘ but that of our common Christianity !’ — And those words of Dr. *Marshall*, ‘ Let men object what
‘ they soberly may ; what they truly believe deserves an answer. For me, and from me, if no
‘ superior hand undertakes the office, they shall always have it in the calmest manner, &c. Sober
‘ arguing I never fear : mockery and bitter railing,
‘ if I could help it, I would never bear, either for
‘ the truth or against it.’ — And lastly, the words of the Church herself, which are truly excellent : ‘ If
‘ any thing be necessary to be taught, reasoned, or
‘ disputed, let us do it with all meekness, softness
‘ and lenity. If any thing shall chance to be spoken
‘ uncomely, let one bear another’s frailty. He that
‘ is faulty, let him rather amend, than defend that
‘ which he hath spoken amiss ; lest he fall by contention, from a foolish error, into an obstinate
‘ heresy. For it is better to give place meekly,
‘ than to win the victory with the breach of charity ;
‘ which chanceth when every man will defend his
‘ opinion obstinately. — The wisdom that cometh
‘ from above, from the Spirit of God, is chaste
‘ and pure, corrupted with no evil affections : it is

* See errors of the press, &c. in *Appeal to Reason and Candour*, p. 153.

‘ quiet,

' quiet, meek, and peaceable, abhorring all desire
 ' of contention : it is tractable, obedient, not grudg-
 ' ing to learn, and to give place to them that teach
 ' better for their reformation, &c. The genuine
 ' sons of the Church (as you there well observe)
 ' will pay a dutiful regard to this kind admonition
 ' of their mother : And those who are of a froward
 ' spirit, and refractory to so loving an advice of so
 ' tender a parent, will be pleased to bethink them-
 ' selves, how far they are *degenerated* ; and whether
 ' the Church may not have too just reason to apply
 ' to them, what the Apostle did on another occa-
 ' sion, *Then are ye bastards, and not sons.*'

For my own part, had I been inclined to write
 against you, the foregoing observations alone, set
 down in the Preface only, would have checked me
 from being bitter, or using any indecent language.
 But your whole *Book* abounds with observations of
 this kind ; and I fully assure myself they proceed
 from a sincere heart, truly desirous of peace and
 love, and totally averse to all contention, and every
 instance of unfriendly debate, especially in treating
 upon religious subjects. I can truly say, I have re-
 ceived great pleasure, and I hope some benefit, from
 these writings ; being drawn up with such candor
 and mildness, and tending to raise and improve
 in my own breast the genuine temper of the Gospel.
 I shall not therefore regret the pains of re-examining
 the Book itself, and drawing from thence such ob-
 servations as shall occur, to give further conviction
 in the present case ; and at the same time to give
You a pleasure, which must needs arise in your
 minds, on reviewing what you have written with so
 much benignity and decency ; especially when you
 observe with how different a spirit you are yourselves
 treated by those who oppose you. You may be
 very easy, and ought, I think, to rejoice, having

evidently the better of them in point of temper, whatever may be your success in point of argument.

Your *Introduction* opens after a manner that sufficiently indicates your wishes, and your purposes: — ‘ It is to be wished that men, for the future, would argue with greater calmness upon the foot of this privilege [of applying for redress, &c.] and that whenever they have any thing to propose to their Governors, either in Church or State, they would do it with all the modesty, all the decency, and all the candor, that lies in their power; proposing it at the same time, with all the clearness of reason, and force of argument, that they are able to produce, or their cause will admit. This is fair dealing, and what becomes *Men*. It is liberal, ingenuous, and generous; and will best befriend their cause in the end, be it of more or less importance. If they have truth on their side, they need but propose it in a handsome manner: The public will judge, and will at length do them and their cause justice. If they think they have truth on their side, when in reality they have not, still there can be no harm in offering their sentiments: Only let them be offered with moderation and calmness. A free and fair discussion, will soon shew wherein they are wrong; and they will be glad to be directed to what is right, when the direction is given in a handsome manner like their own. We who are engaged in making this address, are sensible that the subject of it hath almost always hitherto been made a point of *controversy*. But we think it very possible to prevent its being made so for the future, if men will come to the consideration of it with calm minds. We desire to shew the greatest calmness ourselves; and if any debate should arise (for which we trust we shall give no occasion) we hope
it

it will be managed with that decency, that seriousness, and sincere affection for truth, which becomes men who desire nothing more than the advancement of that, and the public welfare. We cannot take upon us beforehand to answer for the inoffensiveness of our conduct in every part of our design; but in every part of it we shall endeavour to preserve a just moderation of spirit, and to give as little offence as possible, either to our Governors or the Public: And if either of them shall discern we are in any instance wrong, or in any go beyond the line of our duty (that of moderation and temper) we desire to be kindly admonished of our fault, and as kindly convicted of our error.' p. 2, 3.

In the progress of your work, foreseeing what sort of men you were like to meet with in your way, you drop the following gentle intimation; which has been since but too exactly verified.—
 'Persons of narrow minds do seldom extend their thoughts or desires beyond the present state of things, contenting themselves with taking matters as they find them, and scarce having patience enough to hear any proposals for emendations and improvements. From men of this low and contracted way of thinking, we can expect little else but unfriendly censure: But from those who are more liberal, learned, and intelligent, we may hope for a more favourable judgment. For they know that endeavours should be used to bring things by degrees to a more perfect state. And they can plainly discern, tho' their judgments should differ from ours in some particulars, that our views nevertheless are benevolent; kindly intended for the good of mankind, and directed to the great end of advancing Christianity.—We trust there is a nobler spirit in the present age, than was in the past; and that reason and truth will be more calmly

attended to, than has hitherto been usual, upon every subject of importance.' p. 20, 21. And much to the same purpose, upon another occasion, elsewhere. 'Men of candid and generous minds hope, that near threescore years observation may have ripened our judgment, and bettered our temper.' p. 61.

How little you should be offended at difference of judgment, opposing itself in a proper manner, and how much you desire to avoid contest, or allowing even a handle for it, you have given repeated intimations, and even strong assurances; enough, I should have thought, to bring men to consideration and reason, and engage them in a more generous debate (if any) whatever they had to offer upon the subject, in opposition to what you had alledged——' As we judge freely ourselves; so we leave others to judge as freely of what we write. Nor shall we in the least be offended at any one's being of a different judgment from ours; provided he expresses that judgment with due candor and civility.' p. 92.——' We would leave every reader to examine and judge for himself: And he may with the utmost freedom judge either for or against us, according to what shall appear to him to be just, upon considering the evidences.' p. 243.——' If any man who differs from us, shall be so good as to admonish, and shall, in fact, convince us, in any instance, where he shall think us to be wrong; he will be sure, upon our conviction, to receive our public acknowledgments, together with all the marks of esteem and love we shall be capable of shewing, to one who shall appear to have nothing but truth and the public good in view.' p. 231, 2.——' We desire to raise no contest about the matter, leaving every man in full possession of the opinion he has entertained of it, if he chuses
not

not to alter such opinion, and to continue invariable in his adherence to what he has once received.—

In short, we desire no other favour from any sort of persons, but candor and impartiality; begging only, that they would be pleased to take a fair review of the argument, and bestow upon it a very serious and mature consideration. Which if they shall think fit to do, they will, we believe, no less oblige themselves than they will us; and, at the same time, do justice to truth, and to the subject before them.' p. 157, 8.—' As we earnestly desire that controversies may not be renewed, much less perpetuated, about such things as these; we hope our indulgent Governors, who have it so easily in their power to put a fair and amicable end to them, will think it becomes their prudence to do so, by condescending to a review, and to the making of all needful amendments, and that as soon as may be.' p. 110.

Your subject, as I observed before, is of so delicate a nature, that it is difficult to speak upon it, especially in respect to certain articles, without giving offence. You have done your utmost, I am persuaded, to avoid offending, even in treating of such articles; and where you find reason to apprehend resentment or disgust, either upon the account of any observations of your own, or of your friends, expressed with some freedom, you usually put in a caveat, and remind men of candor, and of the duty of passing charitable censures. I shall single out but one or two short items to this purpose. Thus under the article of *grievances*:—

' It can give no pleasure to us to say any thing that may be like to give offence to any, even the meanest person in the Church; much less to those who may have authority in it. We must therefore desire persons of every degree, in this Christian society,
to

to interpret candidly the following queries and observations.' p. 174. Again: ' We must renew our professions, that we always desire to be gentle and candid: And if ever we seem otherwise, as it is contrary to our original purpose, so is it to our settled temper. The gentleness of the *Gospel* is still the favourite temper with *us*; and we constantly desire to be, and to shew ourselves, possessed of it, *tho' we* sometimes (we hope not very often) do *thus speak*.' p. 153.

When you come towards the *conclusion* of your work, you continue to shew the same peaceable and candid disposition, the same love of truth, and hatred of contention about it, which you had evidenced from the beginning. And to speak my real mind, both for your credit and encouragement, I do seriously believe, that your having written in the manner you have done, *tho' upon a very ticklish subject*, has been one great means, under the blessing of God, of preventing such an open and pernicious controversy as you have so frequently and so earnestly desired might be forborne. This manner of applying, and applying so closely to the *consciences* of men, has unquestionably had its weight with many, and will continue to have its weight with all, who are of a disposition averse to wrangling. None of this turn of mind seem as yet to have made any insult upon you. Nor indeed have you left room for any others, who will seriously and impartially consider what you have written, and observe the *manner* in which you have done it. You have, as far as you possibly could, stopt up all the avenues of insult and unmannerly incursion; nor can men therefore, without resolutely breaking thro' all the rules of decency and good behaviour (to which you have so strongly bound them) treat you in any scurrilous and insulting

ing way, or use you with those ill manners, which are familiar only to low people, or such as, tho' learned, do still retain some of the less commendable qualities of the unlearned vulgar. — But all this by the way, as it occasionally occurred to me. I was going to take a short survey of the concluding part of your work. Your temper and disposition, as I said, are here also the same, and your endeavours uniformly calculated to promote peace, and prevent litigation.

You take your leave of your Governors in a manner which they cannot disapprove; nor have I indeed heard that any of them have ever blamed you for your manner of addressing. — ‘ If it had been possible for us to have drawn up this address with more evenness of temper, greater gentleness of expression, or clearer indications of regard for our worthy superiors and the Church; or to have presented it to them, with a more honourable privacy, [alluding, I suppose, to your copy directed at first to the Convocation;] we would have done it with a pleasure, exceeded only by the sincerity of our intention, and the justness of our zeal,’ p. 227. And applying afterwards to the Public in general, in a *Postscript*: — ‘ The great desire we have to maintain peace and charity with all men, and to prevent, as far as in our power, all alterations, either with or between any of our fellow-christians, on a subject of this nature, is the occasion of our subjoining this Postscript. Our preliminary advertisement, and whole inquiry, we hope, have sufficiently shewn, how much we are inclined to peace and love; and how earnestly we wish the reformation of this Church, in a way consistent with both. If we here renew our assurances to this purpose, and give fresh indications of the benevolence of our temper; every good man will be the more convinced

convinced of the integrity of our design; and a bad man will have the less to say in disparagement of it: —We have a request to make to the Public, whom we now address; more especially to our brethren, both Clergy and Laity of the Church of *England*; with whom we shall always desire to maintain a loving, catholic, and friendly agreement, in every point of pure religion, and in every circumstance agreeable to it, as long as we live. Our request is this, that we may have *no unfriendly debates* upon this argument; nor, by our unhandsome treatment of each other, give occasion to our common adversaries to heighten a contention, which they will be but too eager to push forward, when they can hope to make their advantage of it, from the imprudences [I would rather have said, from the culpable indiscretions] of those who engage in it. We can seriously declare for our own parts, that in our way of managing this subject, we have done the utmost in our power to prevent all unbrotherly quarrel; and to pave the way towards a more free and amicable discussion, of whatever may concern truth, and the welfare of this Church, than hath hitherto been usual, when this subject hath been debated. If therefore in the measures we have taken, we have shewn an uniform regard to truth and peace; if in our handling so difficult a subject, we have endeavoured to act as becomes Christians and men of reason, friends to religion, and friends to our constitutions; if above all, we have acted as a sincere conscience directed us, according to the best judgment we could form, in the matters upon which we have treated; we have the justest reason to hope, that we have afforded no handle for *controversy*; much less for chagrin and virulence in the management of any that may be

be set on foot on this occasion. And we would willingly flatter ourselves, that if any Strictures shall be made upon what we have offered, they will be made in the same spirit of candor and benevolence, and in the same language of decency and good manners, which we have all along used, or endeavoured to use, in this whole performance. If otherwise, we must declare again, as we did in another place, that we have no purpose at present, to make any other return to those who shall think fit to oppose us, but our benevolent prayers, and friendly good wishes in their favour [*as you have particularly exemplified in your Postscript to the Appeal* *] leaving the Public to judge, and truth to make its way, as far as it can, and ought in all reason to be permitted to do.' p. 229, 30, 31.—The said Postscript concludes with these words: ' If after all that we have so honestly and so respect-

* ' The Authors of the *Disquisitions* have very little to say to the *Remarks* lately published: Only they desire the Public to take notice, that tho' they think they have been unfairly used, and their cause egregiously misrepresented therein; yet they kindly and candidly overlook all such ill usage, and return not one word, in the way of scoff or scorn, either to irritate, or even offend their worthy Author. It is exceedingly easy, and would be extremely agreeable to many, to reprove and expose him in his own way. But this shall be forborne, at least by the Authors above-mentioned; who have such an extreme aversion to wrangling, that they will never meddle with it.—It is a grief to observe that this writer hath been so very uncandid, and unjust, in almost the whole of his performance. He is nevertheless forgiven; and it is earnestly wished he may consider better hereafter; and if he proceeds to write upon the subject, it is hoped he will remember the benign spirit of the *Gospel*, and consider how far he has deviated from it in his first attempt.—He may go on very securely, for any notice that shall be taken of him by Us; unless in the way of lamenting, and pitying, and praying for him; and perhaps also of admonishing him in a gentle manner, in some future paper.' *Appeal to Reason, &c.* p. 148, 149.

fully

fully written, the suspicion commonly prevailing in human nature, and prejudicing mankind against the best designs, should still remain, and nothing that we have said or done, can possibly remove it; we have then no more to do, but to refer our cause to God, and to every honest man's conscience, to which we speak as in the sight of God; not doubting but it will one day appear to be the cause of that God, to whose judgment we refer it, and to whose blessing we recommend it.' p. 235, 6. To which I may properly subjoin those other words (out of the *Appendix*) with which you conclude your whole Book. 'We have only this to add: If the cause we have engaged in be not, what we sincerely believe it to be, the cause of religion and truth; we only desire to be convinced, that it is not, by the force of clear and satisfactory reasons, and we shall readily submit. But if it be, we hope that good men will favour it, and that God will prosper it.'

Thus you close as you begun your treatise, with the clearest marks of benevolence, candor, equity, piety, and regard for the public welfare, and promotion of true religion. Knowing your intent of publishing some more papers, and having the truest desire to serve you, and so good a cause as you are engaged in, I judged it proper to exhibit in one collective view the several passages above laid down, as drawn from your book, and to present them to you; hoping that this friendly and impartial attempt may be of use to convince serious persons, how injuriously you have been treated, and how little regard has been paid to your earnest and frequent precautions against all unhandsome proceedings. This attempt, I flatter myself, may likewise be of some service to shame the adversaries, if still susceptible of such an impression, and incline them
to

to be more favourable in their future censures. It is a wonder how so many passages, so strong and so affecting, could escape their notice, if, as they would sometimes intimate, they have attentively considered your whole book. If I find that this Letter meets with your friendly acceptance, I purpose in my next, to take a short survey of some of the writings of your *opponents*, and to give you my sentiments upon them: And after that, if I have proper leisure, to consider a common objection against your treatise, as containing *too many articles*. But this my present business will not permit me to do immediately. Yours,

Eumenes.

N U M B. X.

Ipse mihi facile persuadeo Scriptis talibus non moveri, quibus nec ratio suppeditare, nec certa invenitur favere auctoritas. D. Bernard.

THE task I proposed, tho' short, will, I foresee, be somewhat irksome to me; and I therefore almost wish I had not promised to engage in it. To peruse the writings of men of candor gives one pleasure; and the pains we bestow upon them, are sufficiently recompenced by the improvement we gain from their good sense and good temper. These two commonly go together; and I will not say that the Poet is mistaken when he intimates, that

Good nature and good sense for ever join.

But the canker'd and malignant spirit that appears in some writings, makes a person of candid sentiments averse to look into them. It grieves him to see so much ill-nature in men; and it repents him of the time lost in raking into such puddle. Controversial writers too often abound with this sort of spleen; and

and they seem to indulge it, not only as a favorite but also a harmless passion. Those who have animadverted on your *Disquisitions*, are generally of this cast. I shall however enter upon the review of them, tho' with some unwillingness; singling out a *few*, for specimens only of the management of a bad cause. I propose no more than a short catalogue, with a few cursory reflections, taking the several pieces as they lie before me. You are, I doubt not, too well acquainted with them already, with several of them at least. These are some of the most inveterate that have appeared against you: Some of the rest are a little more candid.

In the front of the list appears a most dreadful adversary (the very first that had the assurance to attack the work) styling himself a Clergyman, and willing, as we may suppose, to be thought also an Academician; tho' whether he may be either of them or not, doth not, I think, concern the present question. This man, impatient of any contradiction to his own notions, and totally averse to all proposals of amendment, bids defiance at once to you and your cause, and seems to look upon you as some of the silliest of mortals for attempting to advance it. With high spleen and indignation, with a haughty magisterial air, and pompous eloquence without argument, he disparages you at first sight, harangues the populace against you, and bids them to be upon their guard, at their peril. This was sufficient for the first brush; and it answered the intent, and the exalted spirit of this Gentleman, to be the prime mover. [*Cambridge, we assure ourselves, will not own him for a son. Else, vain and inconsistent are her late endeavours for a reformation there; to which we heartily wish the best success; wishing the same, if it be possible to attain it, in her learned Sister also.*]

Another

Another, having never examined the subject as he should do, nor having a just knowledge either of the design or power of our Legislature, sets out with full assurance that your cause is bad, and that your proposals can never be complied with. And why? Because the *Act of union* is against them: Which, he would persuade us, is of perpetual force, and unalterable; tying down even Parliaments from ever touching upon this subject, or making the least alterations in the concerns of the Church; when yet the Church herself, in declarations confirmed by Parliaments, expressly asserts this liberty, and claims a perpetual and unalienable right, which justly belongs to her, of making alterations in her concerns, whenever occasion requires. [*The pretence that the Act of union precludes all Reviews, will be thoroughly canvassed in another paper (drawn up by a learned and sensible man) in the collection that is intended for a second volume of the disquisitions.*]

Another addresses himself in a most solemn manner to the whole order of our Prelates, lays before them frightful consequences, and insinuates that *Popery* may be at the bottom of the application for a Review.——Another comes out with two dozen of *Queries*; which were nothing at all to the purpose, excepting one: And that either you, or a friend of yours, have readily acknowledged to be a just one.——Another appears with the first part of his *Remarks*, in several letters to a Dignitary; and unhappily does nothing, besides shewing his good will to demolish a cause which he had not sufficiently studied, nor appears to have rightly understood; and discovering a spleen and a prejudice, which have done *him* no service, nor his *opposites* any hurt; their cause remaining still as it was, unshaken and untouched, notwithstanding any thing he has done to distress it.——Another, with a great share

of assurance, and but very little of the knowledge he pretends to, extols our *Liturgy* to the skies, and would have it thought incapable of amendment; running down those who desire it may be made so, and allowing none to be judges, but those who are already of his mind.—Another undertakes a *Defence* of our *Liturgy*, without making any defence of it at all, where a defence was mostly wanted; and only shewing, that he had more good meaning than abilities; and that his zeal for a bad cause was superior to his knowledge in a good one. His making a shew of being a methodist will not excuse him; nor render the *Expedience and necessity of a Review* (asserted by another writer) to be any other than it is, *i. e.* a true expedience and true necessity. Which the world seems to be now sufficiently convinced of.—Another publishes a *Sermon*, preached in the country, in defence of the *Liturgy*; as if the Disquisitions had desired any more than its amendment and improvement; and as if the discussing of this point was a proper subject for the pulpit, either in the country, or any where else.—Another takes upon him (not without some reflections that might very well have been spared) to defend the promiscuous reading of the *Psalms*; insisting, but not sufficiently proving, that the maledictions are only predictions, &c.—Another launches out with a very ludicrous piece, in answer to a very serious argument; and by his indecent drollery upon such a subject, creates an aversion to his *proposals*, which they consummately deserve.—Another feigns himself to be a dreamer of dreams, and imagines he hath seen sights or visions, which it is generally believed he never saw. By visions and dreams, without any arguments he would hope to overthrow your cause.

cause. * And to give his dreams some kind of sanction, he dates them from one of our prime seats of learning. How unhappy is it, that a person who may be supposed to be a divine, as well as an university man, should be thus ignorantly (for I will not say wilfully) opposing the cause of Christ, whilst he is styling himself his friend! † [*The renowned University from whence he dates his piece, will, we presume, esteem no thanks due to a person, who deviating from the rules of argument, loses himself in dreams; and would persuade mankind that vision is sufficient to oppose to facts, and hope that popular harangue may pass for academical reasoning.*]

I think I may here not improperly take notice of some few of the select motto's of your antagonists: which they take the freedom to draw from the sa-

* Your cause, I think, can be very little affected by any attempts of this visionary character; which by serious and wise persons are seldom considered in any other light, than as the vagaries and delusions of an idle brain. For my own part, I can hardly entertain any better opinion of our modern productions of this kind, than the old poet did of those, that were so common and so despicable in his time:

*Non habeo denique nauci Marsum augurem,
Non vicinos haruspices, non de circo astrologos,
Non Iliacos conjectores, non interpretes somnium:
Non enim sunt ii aut arte divini, aut scientia;
Sed superstitiosi vates, imprudentesque arioli,
Aut inertes, aut insani, &c. — Ennii fragm.*

I will just subjoin, and leave you to apply, an observation of a more modern writer, in one of his notes on *S. Cyprian*. — *Utitur ostentionibus & VISIONIBUS: telo, ad conterendos adversarios — valentissimo; alias vano ac futili. Nam & callidus Rhetor, & Sophista vafer, hujusmodi VISA, ad causam suam appositissima, poterit comminisci, & fallere incautos & simplices.*

† *Philo-Christus*: Which, for ought that appears in his little essay, might as well have been written *Philo-Judæus*, a friend to old rites and ceremonies, more than to that rational liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

cred *Scripture* ; and that with no other view, that I can imagine, but to render you odious, and derive an odium upon your cause ; insinuating to the vulgar, by this artifice, that the *Scripture* is against you ; an artifice which you have always disdained, and, I trust, always will ; tho' it may be just enough in you, upon proper occasions, to produce a plain sentence or two, which cannot well be de-torted to an invidious meaning by others, nor shall by you be intended to throw a slur upon your ad-
 verſaries. Here are ſome of their favourite accu-
 ſations againſt you, cloathed in ſacred language,
 and rendring your whole deſign unſacred. *The
 voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of
 Eſau. Of this ſort are they which creep into houſes,
 &c.* [Are you, any of you, conſcious of this, with
 regard to your own conduct ?] *ſpeaking evil of dig-
 nities, and of things which they underſtand not* [Or of
 this either ?] *Candor unmask'd, by H. Weſtern.—It is
 not an open enemy that hath done me this diſhonour, for
 then I could have borne it. The enemy crieth ſo, and
 the ungodly cometh on ſo faſt ; for they are minded to do
 me ſome miſchief ; ſo maliciously are they ſet againſt me.*
 Remarks by a Preſbyter.—More might be added ;
 but ſince they are no better applied, it may be as
 well to paſs them by, and let the retailers make the
 beſt of them. I wonder, indeed, that men pre-
 tending to be Churchmen, and perhaps ſcholars
 alſo, can make ſo free with ſacred *Scripture*, as if it
 was intended for no other end, but to vilify and
 abuſe Chriſtians and Churchmen ; like that perulant
 marginal annotator upon that excellent book *The
 whole Duty of Man*, mentioned in one of the *Spec-
 tators*. A piece of conduct ſo very mean, and diſin-
 genuous, that I want a name for it. Our language
 will not eaſily afford one that will ſuit it ; and I will
 not offer to invent one.

Thus

Thus then stands the case of the opposition hitherto, as far as I can discern it; malevolent enough for certain, but weak enough, to a glaring demonstration. Let those who are embarked in it go on, however: Let them rush forward in their design, and *no man stay them*. If they will *flee into the pit*, with their eyes open, who can help it? 'Tis their own act and deed. You are not chargeable with the consequence of their temerity. You have sufficiently warned them, but warned them to no purpose: They will take no warning. Men who have considered perhaps but for a day, will oppose, will depreciate, will calumniate, what you have been considering for years. Your cause is no loser: It is a gainer by such attempts; and will shine the more gloriously, the more it is opposed, but especially the more it is examined and considered. The mottos to your *Appeal* occur anew to my mind. *Truth fears no examination, and desires only to have a fair and impartial trial; and no man that professes himself to be guided by reason, will refuse to bear reason, on which side soever it is offered.*—*Et refellere sine pertinaciâ, & refelli sine iracundiâ, parati sumus.*

I have the pleasure to be able to inform you, upon a careful and minute examination, that the pieces which have hitherto appeared against you, are much *fewer* than those that have appeared for you; as about 16 against 40: And which is more (for number alone is not to be depended upon) your abettors, for the most part, have written with far better temper, as well as with superior reasoning, in what they have produced. It cannot then be to your discredit, in the first place, that you are found, in this respect, to have the majority on your side: a reasonable ground for presumption this, that you may probably have more friends, upon the whole,

in the kingdom, than your adversaries have; tho' they may not think fit as yet to appear openly in your defence, every one having his private reasons for his silence, and, I doubt not, just ones. Nor, in the next place, can it give you any dissatisfaction (I am sure it will not make you vain) that the ill temper of your adversaries, a temper commonly attending forlorn hope, creates shrewd suspicions in discerning men, that their cause is not good. For if it be good, why can they not manage it with good temper? And why will they derive a disgrace upon it, by a contrary one? It is surely no sign of the goodness of a cause, or however of the wisdom of those that manage it, to be intemperate in the defence of it.

I shall conclude with the words of one your friends, or, as I imagine (if I may imagine it without offence) of some one or other of yourselves. *Philander*, being applied to, spoke thus on your behalf, when he found you ill used by a certain Querist. 'It is reasonable that the proposals contained in the *Free and candid Disquisitions*, being of so much concern to religion and truth, should be fairly examined; and every friend to both will seriously rejoice to see all such matters adjusted to complete satisfaction. In a business of this moment, nothing should be sought for but truth, and things that tend to peace and mutual edification. Persons not capable of judging in the affair, nor of clearing it in the manner that will be expected, by considerate and unprejudiced men, should forbear writing upon it. For they will only amuse and perplex, where they should instruct and illustrate. The authors of the disquisitions, whoever they are, appear to be serious; and I firmly believe they are men of integrity and piety. Those who cannot agree with them, in any point of

‘ of moment, should give their reasons with calmness and mildness; and nobody will blame them. But if men are prejudiced in their inquiries, and treat proposals which they do not like, in a manner that is any way unhandsome, or not agreeable to the rules of truth and seriousness; if they do this upon subjects of religion, or any matter that is of importance to Church or State; they deviate from the design of such proposals, they abuse the patience of the public, and in the end draw upon themselves that contempt, which by their unequitable way of writing or conversing, they may be desirous to fix upon others.’—I am, &c.

October, 1750.

E.

N U M B. XI,

SIRS,

I Lately read with much pleasure what I had long wished for and expected, *An Appeal to common reason and candor in the behalf of a Review*. It is rightly observed by some or other of you (for I know not the particular authors) that we of the Church of *England*, as well as many more of other denominations, are too apt to take things upon trust, especially when they favour our beloved tenets, and what may confirm us in being stanch Churchmen. This piece of conduct, as I take it, is not right; and I could sufficiently expose it, if I were so inclined, as I am not; having nevertheless a serious concern upon my mind, to see any persons of our communion devoted to such measures, and so pertinaciously adhere to them. What I would observe to you is, that this unhappy humour of *begging the question*, how common soever, or by whomsoever it may be indulged, is not the way to come at

Truth, and is the very method, of all others, which will prevent our acquisition of so valuable an attainment.

Too many writers, having once settled their final judgment of things, after a long and laborious study, as they think, will never recede from it afterwards; tho' their search hath been a very partial one, and they have not attained to the full knowledge of the truth. They think it a disgrace to give up any opinion they have once embraced, and have perhaps also openly maintained: And having examined but imperfectly, they really believe that they are right. This seems to be the case of thousands; many of them, I make no doubt, very honest men in their meaning; and men, to whose moral character I would not make the least objection. I have many such now in my view, whom I highly esteem and love. The more I esteem and love them, the more I am concerned to see them so riveted in opinions, which, in my judgment, may well admit, and do really demand, a further examination. But it is in vain for you to apply to them. You must leave them as they are:

— *Mene incepto desistere victum?*

There are others who derive prejudices from the very infancy of their education, and continue in them all their lives. Prejudices so radicated are very difficult to be got over. Even honest and intelligent men find it a hard task sometimes to master such prepossessions, and, not unfeldom, even impossible to do it.

Add to this, the prejudices arising from conversation and correspondence; which are neither few, nor soon obliterated.

But that which I have my eye most upon, in this short letter, is that sort of prejudice which takes all things

things for granted, and for allowed truths (or truths, at least, above all reasonable contradiction) which either the church hath determined, or any eminent members of it have maintained, in obedience to her dictates. Of this kind of prejudice I know not well what to say. It is difficult to say any thing about it, without being suspected to be an enemy to an establishment; which I am very far from being. And yet I would have men, if possible, to consider reason; and first to enquire for themselves, before they determine for others. Many things may be true, and undoubtedly are so, without being established: And many that are established, may possibly be otherwise. If there be but a possibility of of this, there is just reason to inquire, and to allow a freedom of inquiry: which, I think, is not denied us in this protestant Church; a Church that claims the *Scripture* for her *sole rule of faith*.

Nevertheless even in this Church, we find many, who pin their faith upon an establishment, and upon those who have abetted it in their writings; taking all implicitly for truth, which comes from either, and allowing of no demur from any that may be less convinced.

Have we not had examples lately, even in your own affair? Men have appealed to the Church and to its governors, as if the authority of both were irrefragable: Whereas you, with more freedom and equity, have appealed to *common Reason and Candor*, the only proper tests in this case, always allowing the *Scripture* to be our supreme rule. Nay, and to make the matter worse, but all the while serving a turn, some of your adversaries have thought fit, first to represent *You* as not being members of the Church (notwithstanding the fullest declarations to the contrary, every where occurring throughout your writings) and then to represent
your

your *Cause* as already condemned by the Church, and overthrown by its members, even the ablest of its *Champions* (so they word it) whose arguments might be depended upon as valid, and even unanswerable; and which therefore ought to have been submitted to, not only by you, but (to retain their phrase) by all other dissenters from our establishment. And that they might not fail of carrying their point, what do they do? They appeal to our *ecclesiastical Governors*, for the truth of every thing they allege; which I remember was once done in manner and form following.

“ With all due submission and deference, we recommend to the consideration of the *Archbishops* and *Bishops* of these kingdoms, the ensuing Query, amongst several others; viz. Whether or no the several sorts of dissenters, who at present refuse communion with the established Church, do not refuse it without any just reason, and proper grounds? And whether the answers that have already been given them, by several of the most eminent Champions of our Church, be not sufficient to invalidate all the objections of such people, &c.”

Here you see, that the cause of your *Disquisitions* is thrown upon those who separate from our establishment, as if none else could have been concerned in such a cause. This, according to custom, is at once taken for *granted*, and no question asked, nor the least doubtfulness entertained, whether the matter might not possibly have been otherwise: Which you well know it was; and which I shrewdly suspect these Gentlemen, who so much wrong you, are secretly convinced of, tho’ for reasons best known to themselves, they chuse, for the present, to conceal their conviction. However, be not offended at this piece of art: It may turn to your advantage in one respect, tho’ the authors, most certainly, did not

not intend it should in any. The Dissenters were the compilers of your Book : You yourselves had no hand in what you wrote. Very well : You are then free from all the *blame*, and all the *odium* that is cast upon it : Rest therefore, as you have hitherto done, in your contented privacy ; and if you are not allowed to have the *honour*, neither ought you to sustain the *discredit*, of your work.

But there is a more material observation to our purpose, still remaining. It has been already intimated ; but it is proper to be more explicit, and to point out the matter in such glaring and such speaking characters, that the blind may see, and the deaf may hear : which may be done in few words. The Archbishops and Bishops are appointed the Guardians of our Church. Here is a cause to be tried between them and the Dissenters. Their Lordships are appealed to as judges in their own cause.

Just such another appeal I have more lately met with, in one of our miscellanies. The Church of *England* (God always be her Guardian !) having a point of controversy to be decided between herself and you, is (in a well-wrought vision) placed upon a most magnificent throne in *Westminster-hall* ; * not
to

* Those who are happy in the participation of modern visions (a happiness to which the writers of these papers can make no pretence) seem to be favoured sometimes with such a peculiar coincidence of circumstances, as would induce us to suppose that they were not merely fortuitous, but founded upon something of an uniformity of design and representation, whatever spirit they may proceed from. Thus, Great Halls of Judicature, tho' appearing at different periods, and to different persons, are observed, in more instances than one, to make part of the mysterious scene ; together with the material circumstance of profound silence, a single Judge, no jury, no Evidences, no Defendant ; the Appellant having the singular privilege, unknown to our Laws, of alleging whatever he shall think proper (*nemine contradicente*) in favour of his cause. Of this kind, among others, is that extraordinary Vision lately published

to hear your cause, to try the grounds of your complaint, to examine the evidences on your side (tho' you had many of our most eminent Divines, and even of our Bishops, in readiness to produce as vouchers) but to determine *instantly* against you, and that upon the sole merit and reputation of a single *advertisement* in our news-papers: An advertisement, by the way, that was neither for nor against you, but only cleared two eminent persons from some vulgar obloquies; for which you had given no cause, as your own advertisement, soon after published, very honestly testified; which yet was passed over upon this occasion, with a well-devised silence. However, the decision, tho' not the trial, was *instantly* to come on. What is done? The Church being constituted arbitratix, you are at once cast and condemned by the Church, and your cause doomed to perpetual infamy.

This *summary* method of proceeding, so just in some other cases; this begging the question to be decided, and appointing the *Church* to decide it, when she herself is represented as a party concerned (her authority you may see asserted by herself, in one of her articles:—This unfair method, as I esteem it to be) puts me in mind of an observation made, upon a parallel occasion, by one of our most learned and ingenious Churchmen of the last century, the famous Dr. *John White*, in his immortal treatise against the old Church of *Rome*: with whose words I shall conclude this Letter, leaving your adversaries to ruminate a little upon them, and mark

published very seasonably by a learned man, at the end of his Remarks on Ecclesiastical History.—"In a *Vision* that I had, I thought that I was in a *Great Hall* [of justice;] and there "was none there but the JUDGE that sat upon the Bench, "and MYSELF,—I turned to the Judge, and said to him," *Thus stands the Fact, &c.*

how

how apposite they are to their own cause, as they now imprudently, but very confidently, manage it; and to observe how near they approach to the favourite measures of the Romanists, in their way of begging what will never be granted them.

“ This reach of the Jesuite [his antagonist] pleading for the Roman Church sheweth the unhappy condition wherein it standeth; that at every trial passing between us, her miserable children are enforced to beg from door to door: OF YOUR CHARITY GIVE OUR MOTHER LEAVE TO BE JUDGE HERSELF IN THE TRIAL, THAT SHE BE NOT OVERTHROWN.” The way to the true Church, sect. 17.

P. S. Pray, my good friends, what manner of appealing and judging is this? A just one or no? (You see I appeal to *you* in my turn, making you also judges in *your own cause*, as others have made the Church and its Governors to be in *theirs*.) Is this fair? Is this any thing short of appealing to the *Roman Father*, whose judgment is infallible, and who will be sure to determine in favour of his beloved harlot and progeny?

Crito.

N U M B. XII.

A Survey of some late *Objections*, with *Remarks* thereon.

IT was easy to foresee, that a book like the free tho' candid *Disquisitions* could not make its appearance in the world long, before it should meet with objections of various sorts. Care was therefore taken, to preclude many of them, by such proper intimations, as might satisfy reasonable men that they were regarded, and that the authors did not act precipitately, as either not knowing or not mind-

ing what could be alleged against them. It may perhaps be found, upon close and fair examination, that the book itself contains an answer to all or most of the objections that have since been started. Nevertheless, the authors of it being willing to give further satisfaction, where they fairly can, to men of ingenuous dispositions, think it reasonable to comply with the expectations of the public so far, as to review the subject, and give a second consideration to what may have been urged against them or their work. Some indeed of the objections appear to be scarce worthy of notice, others to deserve but little, and perhaps all of them to be such as might very well have been spared, considering what hath been already said, and taking into the account the main design of our treatise, as well as the manner of our application. We have more than once declared, that we neither delight in controversy, nor have any inclination to engage in it. We are still of the same mind, as will easily be discerned by what follows: Which we offer to our brethren of the Church of *England* with no other view, than to let them see that we are not insensible of their objections, and that tho' we think some of them may have injured us, we can bear with them, and are also able upon occasion to do justice to a cause, which hath so much and so often been misrepresented. It is not impossible, nor indeed improbable, but that, in answering some objections, either we or our abettors (tho' we chiefly suspect our *own* infirmities) may utter a word sometimes that may not be altogether agreeable to the mildness and meekness of the Gospel. If this should happen to be the case in any instance, which yet we hope it will but in very few if in any, we will by no means justify it upon recollection, much less upon conviction that we have really run into this offence. And what we say for ourselves, we will

will venture to say for our friends also; who, we very well know, are of the same sentiments, and same temper, in this respect. Provocations, it is certain, we have had more than a few, and some of them very grating ones: which may therefore be the more difficult to pass over, without a resentment, to which frail humanity is too subject. But still it is wiser and better to be as meek and calm as possible; and we shall not repent in the end of any thing we have spoken with mildness, after the example and precepts of our blessed Master.

To descend then to the *objections*; which, as we intimated, are of various sorts; some relating to our manner of addressing; some to the principles and character of the writers; others to some particular proposals; and others to our proposals in general. May the good God direct us, to *give an answer with meekness and fear, to every one that asketh us a reason* of what we have proposed to the world, and of our manner of doing it!

We shall not stand much upon order. The several objections that have occurred, are these; some coming from friends, and some from adversaries to our cause. [—By the way, we desire that we may be excused, if we should happen here and there to take notice of some that may be thought less significant; since they seem not to be thought so by those who urge them; and they, probably, would not excuse us, if we neglected them.]

1. “In the treatise called *Free and candid Disquisitions*, there are too many *apologies*. They are not all of them necessary, tho’ some are, and very proper.”

The objection is fairly proposed, and is readily acknowledged to be a just one. The affair needs only a little explanation; and then the world may either justify or condemn our conduct.—The
true

true reason of many, and perhaps of most of the apologies here alluded to, is this. Objections, of several kinds, were either actually made, or else distantly foreseen, whilst the work was under consideration. To prevent, as much as possible, all unnecessary debates, and every occasion of offence (which men are apt to take, when they dislike a subject) it was thought proper to pay a decent compliment to such objections, either by taking direct notice of them, or by touching upon them occasionally. This was generally done in a language expressing civility and respect, becoming persons addressing their superiors, and regarding the content and peace of the community. Nevertheless, since we have not been so happy, as to give that general content, which we could have wished, and did hope to give, in this respect, we are free to take upon ourselves the burden of the objection, and shall endeavour, upon any future occasion, to avoid this error on the right side. This being the *first* attempt, we are, we hope, the more intitled to pardon, if we have the rather been too obliging.

2. "The Disquisitions are penned with too meek and mild a spirit, and want that force and freedom which are necessary to make impression upon the present age. Few will now attend to a still small voice, &c. And yet it must be owned that there is something very affecting in them, and what may excite considerate men to serious attention; as it is hoped it has done many."

To this we shall only say,—It is hoped that writing in the *gentle spirit* of the *Gospel of Peace* cannot justly be found fault with. The peace of the Church, and the reverence due to its Governors, require it. Divine wisdom prescribes it; common prudence directs it. It has a greater tendency to do good, and will operate more successfully in time,
than

than the contrary spirit. It works indeed by slower methods, but by more certain and less hurtful ones. If it gains less attention at present, it will engage greater hereafter, when men come to consider things in cool blood, and with less prejudice than they now do. It prepares mens minds for reflection; it disposes them to be more calm and more serious in examining; and when they are so, they will be more likely to find, and embrace the truth. "In things of this kind" (saith a pious and sweet-temper'd Bishop) "*meekness* may do God more service than courage: And we find in all experience, that the pores are better opened with a *gentle* heat, than with a *violent*." Things are not to be done all at once: The ignorances and prejudices of men will not bear it. They must be wrought upon by degrees, and by gentle methods. There must be *Time* for consideration, and for reforming. Persons are too impatient, who either expect or desire to see reformati^ons undertaken and accomplished off a *sudden*. Such things are neither to be expected nor desired by those, who consider the state of human minds, and human affairs. It is better to wait, after representing things candidly; and to bear as far as possible, with what may be amiss, till it shall please God, in his own good time, to incline the hearts of governors to reform them: Which it may reasonably be hoped, will be done by degrees, tho' not all in an instant. The *Disquisitions* have opened the way for reflection, and have petitioned for reformation in the style which the authors judged most adviseable, and found to be most agreeable to their *own* sentiments and tempers *. They leave all other

* A worthy person, touching occasionally upon the objection above referred to, writes thus: "*For my own part, altho' I am not able to pen any thing with that great gentleness that runs*
K *throughout*

other men to their own way of judging and writing; not envying any who have better spirits, but believing none can have better hearts. They desire that every enquiry, and every debate, upon this important argument, may be carried on with due moderation; and (if possible to avoid it) that there may not be the least mixture of human spleen and passion, in the conducting of this whole affair, or of any part of it: Which if observed by others with the same care that it has been endeavoured to be done by them, will, they are persuaded, bring on a reformation the sooner. And may it be a happy one, whensoever it shall be undertaken and accomplished!

3. Our *caution* and *reservedness* (however reasonable and prudent) is, it seems, unaccountable to some, and not very pleasing to others.—“It would have given great satisfaction, if we could have known your *names*. Why do you conceal them? What *reason* have you for this? &c.”

—And pray, what reason have *You* for asking this? Why are you so desirous, why so impatient, to know our names? Have you any particular *business* with any of us? Are ye also willing to be these men's disciples, and to join in the same cause, in which they are engaged? If not, of all things in the world, we beg you would inform us, *why* you are so curious? Is there any mighty *interest* at stake, that requires a resolution of your question? What is that interest, and what is your concerns in it? As to the *reasons* why we did not think fit to divulge our names, you have them in our book. Thither we refer you. And you are there also told, more than

throughout the work, yet I cannot but think it will fare the better for it upon the whole, and will, if neglected, justify a more spirited expostulation hereafter.——As to which, we chuse to say nothing upon the present occasion.

once,

once, as we remember, upon what reasonable conditions we shall be free to make them known. Do you desire more still? Or *can* you in *reason* desire more? That reason surely must be an extraordinary one, if any: And we are at a loss to guess at it; *You*, to be sure, know your private reasons: *We* have none but what we have made public. If you will not be content with those, you are like to have none other from *us*. Therefore pray be easy, and for the future be pleased to mind your *own* business.

We have two papers now in our hands (by the favour of some sincere well-wishers) which we judge proper to produce upon this occasion, having free leave to do so. And we do it in justice to ourselves, as well as for the further satisfaction of those who are friends to our cause.

The authors and editors, in my opinion, did perfectly right in not publishing their *names*. For it would have turned to no real account. It would only have amused men with idle speculations; and perhaps drawn an odium upon many worthy persons, which they now happily escape, or at least do not feel in the manner they would have done; tho' I am persuaded they would at the same time have gained a great share of love and esteem; which indeed they now have, tho' unknown, from abundance of people: Who heartily approve of their work, and earnestly pray for its success. On the other hand, 'there are those, as Bp. Hall too truly observes, who, notwithstanding the light of knowledge, are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness. So that our prayers and endeavours must not be more bent against blind eyes, than against froward hearts; for there doth naturally reign in us a certain envious perverseness of spirit, which many times sets us off from the acknowledgment of those truths, whereof we are

inwardly convinced. I have sometimes read in
 Maldonate's Commentaries, when he falls upon a
 probable and fair sense of a difficult text, that he
 subjoins, *I could like that explication well, if it were*
not Calvin's: Like to that prejudicate Italian,
 who being at deadly feud with a great rival of
 honor, gave his vote (after a nap taken in the se-
 nate) in no other terms than these; *I am against*
that which N. spake; and being told that opposite
 of his had not yet spoken, then, saith he, *against*
what he will speak. This disposition makes men
 such as the Psalmist complains of, *haters of peace*;
 of whom the Holy Ghost passeth an heavy doom;
destruction and misery is in their ways; the way of
peace have they not known." Peace-maker, sect.
 xv. The application is but too obvious on this, and
 on every the like occasion.

Before we exhibit the other paper, it may be
 proper to advertise, that we owe the favour to a
 friend, who assures us that he can *with honour per-*
mit it to be made public, if it shall be judged any way
serviceable to the cause of truth, and to the design of
the free and candid Disquisitions. There are indeed
 some things in it, which for our own parts, we
 should have been content to pass over in silence, as
 we have hitherto done, knowing of no reasons why
 we should gratify the world in what it has no con-
 cern in. But there being nothing in the Letter, that
 we can perceive, which is like to be of disservice to
 us, and there being so much curiosity (however
 needless) to know somewhat more than is yet known,
 about our concerns of this kind, here follows the
 whole of it as we have it, without the least reserve.

" SIR,

“SIR,

IN answer to your inquiry, I can only say, that the persons concerned in the *Disquisitions* are far more numerous than I imagined them to be; and that those who have acceded to them, since that work was published, have added as considerably to their weight, as they have done to their number: And the number, by what I can hear, is daily increasing, in proportion as the *Disquisitions* spread, and are approved of. I was informed lately, by a very knowing person, who, I apprehend, was early made acquainted with the design, that it has been on foot a great while; that the plan had been communicated to him in writing about five years ago; that he had offered some observations, which he still wishes had taken place; that the persons engaged in the work, or in promoting it, were then a very considerable number, Clergy and Laity; as I remember, he said, between three and four score, in different parts; that a short draught, or less perfect copy, had been submitted to the consideration of the late Bishop of *London*, and by him, if I mistake not (for I did not minutely inquire) to the late Archbishop of *Canterbury*; that the former kept it by him about three quarters of a year, and that the latter expressed some diffidence; that the letter from the Country-clergyman, towards the close of the work, is the production of a person of far greater consequence, and much more known in the learned world, than is commonly imagined; and finally, that the work has more numerous abettors than are willing to appear upon the stage, till they see the issue, or can discern the general inclinations of the kingdom. This is all I can acquaint you with at present, in relation to this affair. I am, &c.

P. S. Since my writing as above, I have recollected something further, which may be agreeable to the design of your inquiry. I am well assured that the world happens to be wrong, in some of its various conjectures touching the several Authors and Editors of the Treatise before mentioned; and that its curiosity on this head will never be gratified (if it be possible to avoid it) till one generation at least is past*. These only, upon the whole, are allowed to

* We allow this information to be just; yet many venture to mention one condition, upon which we shall be free to gratify the curiosity of the Public, in a much shorter compass of time, if it shall be thought of any real use: And that is, that if we shall find the Book answered and confuted to our just and reasonable satisfaction, by any tho' the meanest hand, using us with due civility; we will then publish a thankful acknowledgement of our conviction, and a free retraction of our errors (supposing them such) signed with the names of as many as shall be so convinced, and shall be willing that their names should appear on such an occasion. Some at least may be depended upon, it being already a fixt resolution; and the rest shall be left to their just discretion.

N. B. Some persons (supposed to be more officious than friendly) have thought fit to intimate to their friends, since the publication of the Disquisitions, that they either had some concern in that work, or some correspondence with the authors. Those authors are thankful for any favours they have received, but cannot acknowledge any with which they are unacquainted. Nevertheless, since in so large a correspondence, carried on by different hands, in different parts, and with different persons, it is possible enough that the contributors of some favours may remain as yet unknown to those who are principally concerned, especially as some of the intelligences received have no names annexed to them, and others who have desired answers, have been directed to by such signatures as they have thought proper to recommend; upon these and the like considerations, we think it best to intimate, that we are thankful to all who have any way obliged us, whether in a manner more direct or more remote, whether we can guess, or cannot guess, from whence the obligations came. And we also hope, that those who may have communicated any thing, which we judge to be less to our purpose, will excuse our passing it over in silence, but still with due esteem for their friendly intentions.

be right, who candidly believe these several Gentlemen to be, what in their work they have so seriously and so frequently professed themselves, namely *sincere Friends, and genuine Members of the Church of England*. This, for my own part, I never questioned, (the book throughout having so many glaring indications of the truth of it;) and being satisfied of this, I inquire no further." — *Feb. 1749.*

To the foregoing we will take the liberty to subjoin another paper, more lately come to hand, from a friendly correspondent, containing the sentiments of a person of worth and dignity, who appears to have considered the matter with attention, and to form a right judgment upon it. — "*The success of the whole affair, to which I am a hearty well-wisher, depends more upon keeping the names of the authors a secret, than any thing else: For while they are unknown, the enemies of this excellent scheme have nothing but the argument to write against; whereas were they once known, the Public might be troubled with personal altercations, more than real objections.*"

You see then what *prudence* suggests, in the judgment of a person who is well known to have a great share of it. Why then (to return once more to our inquisitors; why) are you so desirous to know what we are unwilling you should, and what you would probably make no good use of, if you did know it? Can you not be content with the *argument* alone? Contend with that as much as you please, and demolish it if you can. It can be of no avail to you to inquire after the authors, when you have their argument before you. You may judge of *that*, without knowing *them*. The argument is the same, whether you know the authors or not. The argument therefore only is to be considered by you, if you have any thing to say against it; and to that considerati-

On we invite you.—Lastly, be pleased to observe, that the great inquisitiveness which some of you have hitherto shewn, as it indicated something that was not very fair and ingenuous, so if continued in hereafter, it will turn out to be downright *ill-manners*; especially since you know so well the resolution of the authors on this head, and their reasons for it, which you have forced them to repeat to you; and also (we may add) since you see how little regard the Governors have paid to their application, however dutiful, however earnest, however important. Would it now be wise, do you seriously think, to make known to them or to you, *who* are the supplicants? Wait a while: have patience: you will meet them one day before the *great Tribunal*. Then lift up your heads with joy, that you have discovered them;—and attend to the final sentence to be pronounced upon *them* and *you*.

4. ‘ We cannot readily join with these men, unless we knew a little better what complexion they are of, what *Party* they are enlisted in, &c.’

Unhappy humour!—*Prejudice* prevails too much in this Nation; in Church-matters more perhaps than in any others. Men of seriousness lament it; because it is destructive of the true ends of Government in Church and State: And wheresoever it prevails, and is encouraged, it will do injury in time to both. Undoubtedly Factors find their ends in promoting it; And as they are sagacious enough to discern, so are they active enough to pursue their own interests. But the Church and State suffer. This, it seems, is not considered: Or the welfare of each is at least mistaken: The most favourable construction this, that we can possibly put upon such proceedings.

By what we have been able to observe, since the publication of our *Disquisitions*, endeavours have been

been used, by more than a few interested persons, to prejudice the Public against them, by suggesting that the authors either are not of our communion, or at least are not those real friends to it, which they would be thought to be, and which their treatise imports they are. We can very well bear with this suggestion; the more, because we know it to be an unjust one. We have, upon repeated occasions, given all the satisfaction possible, that we are members of the Church of *England*: We have also shewn, with equal evidence, that we desire its welfare. The Disquisitions themselves will testify this, to all unprejudiced persons: Those who desire greater or better testimonies, deserve none; nor shall we think it needful to give them any. However, to convince those, who may be willing to be convinced, and have truth only in view, we judge it reasonable to give this further account of ourselves. We are of no party, that we know of, in regard to Church or State. We pursue the plain and just interest of both, as far as we can discern it: And we set very little store, by any private interest of our own, so long as we can, by less regarding it, promote the common interest of our Country. These are our real sentiments, these our aims, these our pursuits. Let who will, that may be prejudiced, find fault with either. If it be necessary, or possible, to clear these matters still further, we chuse to do it, by telling the world (which we do with the utmost freedom and ingenuity) that tho' we follow no private opinion, nor implicitly engage ourselves to any authority; yet we consider the interest of this Church and Nation in the same light, and adhere to it upon the same principles of liberty, charity, peace and unity, which those excellent men did, who were so justly distinguished in the last century, and about the beginning of this, for their large and generous notions of the Christian Religion, and their

zeal

zeal to promote it upon its own just and solid bottom ; viz. Bacon, Usher, Mede, Bedell, Taylor, Hales, Chillingworth, Cudworth, Wilkins, Hale, Burton, Tillotson, Tennison, Burnet, Patrick, Cumberland, Lucas, Boyle, Locke, Newton, &c. besides several other writers of eminent character, whom we have occasionally cited to corroborate particular arguments, in the series of our disquisitions.

From henceforward then we may reasonably desire, that in common civility and justice, men would forbear their unfair insinuations, and be content with the account we give of ourselves, without inventing any of their own. This being the *true* account, we are no way ashamed of it, and are willing to stand by it ; being willing also, with those Gentlemen we have mentioned, to live and die, as we have been educated, in the communion of the Church of *England* ; only wishing, as they did, to see her more reformed, that we may live and die therein with greater comfort, and with better hopes of her future, than we have evidence of her present flourishing condition.

5. ‘ It became *true Friends* to the Church, says one ; It became her *genuine Sons*, says another, to ‘ to have overlookt her defects, to have thrown a ‘ veil over her infirmities, and not to have exposed ‘ either the one or the other to the view, and consequently to the contempt of the Public’ [as these Authors, it is insinuated, have done.]

Begging pardon for difference in judgment, It became *true Friends*, and *genuine Sons*, of the Church to do as the authors of the Disquisitions have done. Our reasons are these : The Church of *England* (God bless and preserve her !) had, in a train of fulsome compliments, time after time, been egregiously flattered, and superlatively extolled, by many partial writers, under her *imperfect reformation*. The consequence

sequence was, that many saw nothing but beauty in our Church, where others, who were less partial, saw but too much deformity. It was necessary therefore to take a different course, since truth required it, and to shew men in a clear manner, and with due freedom, but at the same time with due respect, that some things seemed to be wrong, and to call for farther consideration, notwithstanding such compliments. This indeed might be lookt upon as a bold undertaking, after so many eulogies from persons of great name and esteem, and considering the reverence due to an establishment. But truth ought to be spoken, where the cause of religion requires it, and the interest of society makes it necessary. Which, corroborated with the sentiments of men of the greatest character in the Church, both dead and living, animated us to such an undertaking, and confirmed us in our resolution to proceed with it. If we are blamed, we are willing enough to sustain the blame, when we have such men to stand by us. The dead cannot recede, and the living will not, having regard to their character; which we are sure they will always retain. We are therefore safe from the effects of such obloquies, and may still be allowed to be *true Friends* to the Church, since we tread in the steps of those who were the truest; and to be her *genuine Sons*, when we have living Fathers, and departed ones, to appeal to as precedents. The *daubing with untempered mortar*, and the *propheying of smooth things*, tho' our people love to have it so, is not agreeable to our way of thinking, in an affair of this moment. We are free, with old Bp. *Bale*, and old Father *Latymer*, (both honest men, and sincere well-wishers to our Church) to *call a spade a spade*, when just occasion requires it; as we think it does here. And tho' we are sufficiently sensible, that *Obsequium amicos*, but *veritas odium parit*, yet we are not, nor will be, such
tem.

temporizers, as to give up the latter, for the sake of the former. No, we have maturely considered both, and can easily discern which of the two is of more value at present, and will be more rewarded hereafter. Having therefore the good of this Church in view, and being more and more convinced about her real interest, upon such deliberate consideration, we see no reason to recede from our purpose, nor to allow that we have been too free in manifesting either her *defects* or *infirmities*, or consequently in desiring men to consider about a remedy. — We conclude our answer to this objection, with the observation of the prince of orators, addressing his *Athenians* at a very important crisis, which seems to us to be no less applicable to the present, and which we therefore desire may be applied, with the regard that is due to it.

* *These things, O ye Athenians, which are thus freely set forth to you, are most of them but too true, tho' it is to be wished they were otherwise; and it is like enough that you are very little fond of bearing them. But if the CONCEALING them, in order to avoid giving OFFENCE, were a means to REMOVE them; it would be but right to accommodate such an address to your taste. The case being otherwise, to smoothe and palliate matters, at such a crisis, would in the event be as detrimental as it is now unseasonable: And it will draw a just, tho' a very scandalous reflection upon us, if we can so far deceive ourselves, as for the sake of PRESENT EASE, to postpone and neglect the opportunity now in our hands, of doing what the PRESENT EXIGENCES so manifestly demand of us. —*

Who then (begging leave now to apply; Who) are *true Friends*, and who are real adversaries, to the Church? Who are her *genuine Sons*, and who are not genuine? Those who flatter, or those who speak the truth, in her behalf? those who mince, or

* Τῶν τούτων, ὡς ἀνθρώποις ἀντιπαρὶσταί, κ. τ. λ. *Phil.*

those

those who utter their minds honestly and openly in her favour?

6. ' The Disquisitions contain *too many* articles. ' It had been better to have mentioned some few of ' the capital ones. And some seem to be but of ' little *significance*, &c.'

Altho' enough hath been said in different parts of the disquisitions, to obviate this objection, and remove the ground of it; yet it seems adviseable to say something farther; the authors nevertheless remaining in their first sentiments, and still continuing to wish for such a reformation as they have requested, tho' not expecting to see it in their own days.

The objection consisting of *two* parts, it may be proper to consider each distinctly.

As to the *former*, it is true enough that the articles laid down in our scheme are pretty numerous. But then it will be remembred, that we did not lay equal stress upon them all. We have expressly declared the contrary, and desired our Governors and the Public to take notice of it. This then, it may be hoped, will be admitted as some alleviation of our fault, if it be any, that we have been so honest as to open our minds at once, out of our real desire to do the Church the best service that lay in our power.

— But to descend to some more particular considerations. (1.) The Rulers of the Church seemed always desirous to know the utmost of mens demands and expectations, (meaning men of reason and piety) who wished for any reformation in the Church, and to know all at once; that they might the better judge, and form their resolutions accordingly *. (2.)

We

* That was a very unchristian resolution recorded of some Christian Bishops at the last review. *Now we know all their minds, we will damn them if they comply*; namely, by making such terms as they could not comply with, agreeable to their sentiments,

We reasonably supposed, that all we have presumed to offer, would naturally and almost necessarily occur, on a design of taking a thorough Review. Such a review only will give just content. This alone will remove all objections that shall be found to be just and reasonable. A partial remedy is next to none. It may rather aggravate than remove a disease. (3.) Considering the most compleat scheme of the Christian revelation, and how fitting it is that all things belonging to its worship, and calculated to set it forward in the world, should bear some just proportion to its own intrinsic excellence, and great and most benevolent design; we could not be content with representing things by halves, in the attempt we have made to serve it on this occasion. If then our zeal for it shall be thought to have carried us a little too far (in so luke-warm an age) in our endeavour to do it service; this, we make no doubt, will easily be forgiven us by men who have the same veneration for it that we have, and the same desire to see it spread and flourish in the world. (4.) If we could, upon any reasonable prospect, have foreseen, that a *review* was likely to be the immediate, or not very remote effect of our application (which we much doubted, and even almost despaired of) we should certainly have proposed fewer articles, and have mentioned only the principal. But we do not yet

timents, and to what they had given in. This is the effect of a *party-spirit and human policy* in matters of religion: Which never did good to the religion of Christ, and has always been a great obstacle to its advancement; evermore corrupting it first, and then hindering its reformation when corrupted. One of the greatest adversaries which this religion has, tho' commonly the least discern'd to be so — However, the case is different at present, from what it was when the above-mentioned declaration was made. The genuine children of the Church are now applying, and delivering honestly their minds to the Fathers of it, in a full detail of circumstances. Can they expect any other than a fatherly reply, if any reply they have at all, from such men?
repent,

repent, nor see any just reason that we should. We had a regard to future and (we hope) better times, more favourable to a reformation, and more zealous to promote it. Whenever it shall please Providence that those times shall come, every the minutest request we have offered, will, we verily believe, be found to have its proper reasons, and will probably, then be judged to be of some use. (5.) To abate somewhat of the self-complacency, which prejudiced men may entertain, on our supposed imprudence in this instance, they will permit us to satisfy ourselves that we have done the best we could, and to assure ourselves that if we had done much *less*, and proposed *fewer* amendments, they would have been averse to our scheme, and done all in their power to obstruct it.——Lastly, the serious and unprejudiced part of mankind, will be convinced, by what we have here and elsewhere offered, and what shall occur to themselves, from their own observation, that the *number* of our requests is not the true reason why a reformation is deferred. That reason, whatever it is, will appear in a different light another day: the day *when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed*, and the supreme Judge will call men to account for their stewardship, both those who have either openly or secretly opposed the great design of his revelation, and those who have looked on unconcernedly, and neglected to do it service, when it was in the power of their hand to do it.

2. To the *other* part of the objection, which intimates, that several of the things proposed are but of small significance, &c. we return the following considerations: —— (1.) Nothing is to be esteemed of small significance, that has a tendency to make the constitution of our Church unexceptionable, and to render its reformation more complete. ‘The removal
‘ even of *small defects*, and improvement from good

' to better, should always be the object of every man's
 ' warm wishes, and modest and peaceable endea-
 ' vours *.' (2.) Every observation that has been of-
 fered, will be found to be of use upon a review, if ever
 such an undertaking shall in good earnest be entered
 upon. Otherwise the proposal of trifles may be pretend-
 ed as a sufficient excuse from engaging in it, when the
 truth is, that we have no inclination to set about it.
 (3.) These less important things, as they are by some
 thought to be, ought in reason and equity to be con-
 sidered in *conjunction* with the greater; since they are
 parts, tho' smaller ones, of the same scheme; as spars
 and rafters are in a large building; none being in-
 significant where they may be of some use. (4.)
 Many *greater* points, especially pertinent to our
 scheme with those which we have produced, have
 been designedly passed over by us, out of tenderness;
 and our omission of these, as far as we can yet hear,
 has not been resented by any who have made the pre-
 sent objection. If therefore we have been content
 without making the greater demands, may we not
 be excused for having made the lesser? Surely we
 may well meet in a middle way, give and take, ex-
 cuse and be excused. (5.) Therefore, if you will be
 content to allow the greater points which we have
 actually insisted upon, and which you see set forth
 in a pretty strong light here and there in our treatise,
 we shall make no great scruple of yielding up to you
 every smaller article upon your own terms. But,
 (6.) may we not take the liberty to remind you on
 this occasion, that we have proposed to you nothing,
 tho' ever so small (or what you may think to be so)
 but what had been proposed before by others, who
 in their time have been some of the principal pillars
 of the Church? Are these things then become of
 less significance since their time? or else have they
 suffered some diminution in passing through *our*
 hands?

* Mr. Jortin. pref. to *Remarks*.

hands? (7.) Permit us also to observe to you, that you seem not to have sufficiently considered the difference of men's apprehensions. What may appear of small moment to some, may appear to be of much greater to others. For all do not, nor can think alike. Perhaps some of the most important considerations which we have proposed, may seem light and insignificant to *you*, and will consequently be neglected by you. But you should always remember, that the latitude of *your* conscience is not to be a rule to that of others. Be content to let others judge for themselves, as they are willing that you should, according to your own apprehensions, without condemning *Them*: This is the rule of equity. — Lastly, be pleased to consider, whether it be just to reject the *whole*, only because some of the proposals may be less to your liking. We have, it is true, pointed out a great many things in our address; and we are willing enough to allow (since you think so) that some of them may be of less importance. But what then? Is there nothing right that we have suggested? or nothing of consequence enough to be considered? If there be but a single article that shall be thought to be of moment, should not that be considered, and a reformation made? Why should we reject the *whole* as unnecessary, if some particulars shall be judged so? Is this according to our usual way of judging in other cases? — In short, remove all *unnecessary burthens*, and that will make things easier for the present. Leave the rest, if you please, to succeeding times, when the Nation shall be in a better disposition to reform. But if ye will do nothing, not even the least thing in the world, after all these remonstrances; if no applications, no intreaties, no arguments will prevail with you to compassionate the case of those who are burthened; it will be too obvious to call to mind, and also to apply, what the Orator says to the Rulers of

Athens, towards the final declension of their State : *Ye constantly cry, These are small things, not of consequence enough to deserve our consideration : And yet when you come to the point of executing any of those which you call the greater things, ye do not perform even the smallest.* This piece of ill conduct, he observes, had often proved detrimental to their affairs ; and it was soon after a means, amongst others, of bringing them to ruin.—Thus we have spoken our minds fully in answer to this objection.

But it seems we are not to let it pass so. A friend to whom we are obliged for some other favours of this kind, being resolved to examine this objection in his own way, has furnished us with some observations which seem to be better calculated to abate its force, and to set the whole affair in a just light. In gratitude therefore for his pains, and in further justice to our own good intent, we subjoin them here.

“ My design is, to consider briefly and fairly how the case stands in reference to an objection which I have sometimes heard, against the *Candid Disquisitions*, as proposing too many articles, and some of them of small concern.

I know of no better way to set this matter in a just light, than to examine what those *Disquisitions* do really contain, what they propose to be amended, and whether the authors themselves (as foreseeing such an objection) have made any reasonable allowances, in relation either to the number of their articles, or to the lesser weight and significance that some of them may be supposed to carry.

I begin with the latter, inquiring what *allowances* they may have made, in regard to the objection above mentioned.

In the *Preface* are these words : — “ If ever the revival that is here desired, shall be resolved upon, this work will point out most things to view, that
may

may be proper to be considered in such an undertaking. And if it exhibit *others*, that shall be thought *less material*, or less convenient to be altered; nevertheless it can do no harm, as we suppose, to have *gently* suggested them; since every man is still at liberty to abound in his own sense." P. 11. 2d ed.

Towards the close of the *Introduction*, I find this paragraph, which may be something to the present purpose.—“ Since the design of these papers is, with great submission and deference, to point out some things in our establishment, which may want a review, and, as such, may deserve the consideration of our Governors both in Church and State; we hope the leading men in each, especially the former, will with a candor and condescension peculiarly becoming them, vouchsafe to survey what we offer; and, with all just freedom and honorable impartiality, examine and judge, whether, or how far, *any* or *all* these things may deserve to be reviewed and amended.” p. 10.

Alluding, at the end of their first chapter, to the supposed difficulty of the noble work therein proposed, that of a new translation of the Bible, &c. “ We cannot (say they) suppose, that any argument will be drawn from hence to the prejudice of our subsequent proposals; or that they will not be allowed a fair hearing, merely because what we have here proposed, may appear to some to be very difficult to execute. For if our *other* proposals (suppose ever so *few*) shall appear more feasible, may we not justly hope, from the candor, zeal, and abilities of men of learning, that *something* will be done in relation to *some* or *other* of these proposals.” p. 21.

Having in their fifth chapter laid down a considerable number of articles, some or other of which they seem to suppose would not be very acceptable, they make a *remark* by way of sequel, which to my

thinking, clears their whole design at once, and obviates every objection that can be made on this head. "Before we conclude this section, we judge it proper to lay down one general remark ; which we are desirous should be applied to particular cases, as the importance of any of them, more or less, shall happen to require. In what we have hitherto offered, we have intermixed a variety of particulars which do not seem to be all of them of *equal concernment* : And in what we shall propose hereafter, we shall probably insert some more, which may be justly deemed to be of *inferior* consideration. If a query should arise, how far we desire any stress should be laid upon those which are of less moment ; the question may soon and easily be resolved : Let them be allowed the weight they shall be judged to deserve : and we desire no more. As to those that are of *more importance*, and upon which we shall be found to lay the great stress of our application ; we hope *they* will not be passed over, or regarded only in the same light with those of *less* consequence. We are very sure that *some* of the points we offer, deserve the most serious consideration of a Christian Church and Christian State. Nor do we yet know that we have, or foresee that we shall offer any that are of *no* concern. We believe all may deserve consideration, especially the *more weighty* ones. And those that shall appear to men of judgment to be of less weight, we are willing, as we said, that they should pass as such." p. 91, 92.

In their *Postscript* (which appears to be chiefly calculated to anticipate objections) they speak again upon this head, and seem to be sufficiently apprehensive that endeavours would be used to disparage their application, and defeat the design of it, under some specious pretences or other of this kind.

—"If in any particular and *less material* instances, some

some of our observations shall be judged to be less necessary, or any of our arguments to be less valid and conclusive; yet may we not reasonably ask this favour, *viz.* that our application may have a fair hearing on the *whole*? And that if *some* particulars will *not* bear the stress we seem to lay upon them, others may be allowed that which they *will* bear? Men of *equitable Dispositions*, accustomed to fair reasoning, and willing to do justice to every subject, as far as it shall deserve, are not apt to single out particulars, and infer from each or from any of them, taken separately, that the whole design is unjustifiable. But they consider it altogether in a collective view; observing chiefly where the *main* stress is laid, and whether the argument on the *whole* deserves the consideration of the public. If [certain] *particulars* are, in their judgment, wrong, they express that judgment of them with *candor*, and never conclude that the main cause is affected, much less overturned, by any less material defects they observe in these. If then any particulars occurring in the course of these papers, should be thought wrong,——yet let not the *whole* be *laid aside*, or judged altogether undeserving of public regard, on the account either of some *less important* observations, or some less material deficiencies.——The *main cause* we have in hand is still good, and ought consequently to be *regarded*, even tho' some of the particular arguments, whereby we have endeavoured to support it, should not be found equally pertinent, &c. We are encouraged to hope however, upon reviewing the whole,——that we shall so far gain the point in view, as to put our governors upon deliberating, whether a revival may not be necessary; a revival at *least* of *such* branches of our constitution as shall seem most to deserve, and most to require it, at the hands of such Governors."

—And in a note (very appositely, as I should think)—“ Whenever our Governors shall think fit to engage in a *Review*, they will find even the *minute*st of the observations we have made, to be of *some* service. For that will be a time to sift every thing to the *bottom*, and leave *no* objection unheeded,” p. 233, &c. Now this last observation, in my opinion, sufficiently accounts for every step that has hitherto been taken, whether by persons of high rank or of low, to defeat the design of the Disquisitions, and procrastinate the affair of a review ; urging reasons that are no reasons when you come to examine them by that treatise ; which, as far as I can see, has precluded every one of them, and has left no room for pretences of any sort, in order to evade the force of so weighty an argument.

The truth of this, I conceive, will appear still more plainly, if we now go on, as was proposed, to inquire what are the several articles which the Disquisitions do really contain ; and whether therefore they have afforded sufficient ground for the objection which we are now examining. To this end, I think it proper to draw out the main contents into short and plain *propositions* : By discerning of which in one view, we may more easily judge what weight there is in the objection, and how far it deserves to be regarded by equitable judges.—The impartial reader, as he goes along, will probably think it proper to stop a little at each article, and consider whether it can be fairly objected to.

I.

We greatly want a better *version* of the Bible, than that which we now have.—Our present *division* of the sacred Book into chapters and *versicles* is in numberless instances faulty, and very prejudicial to the

the sense and design of the Scriptures. A remedy in this respect is highly to be wished for.—The *Contents* of chapters, as now standing at the head of them, are generally very defective, and often very erroneous. We could wish to have a much better supply of this kind; such as might properly and usefully be read in our Churches, before the reading of each Lesson; as also proper reflections or observations after it, tending to inculcate the main design, and apply it to practical uses.—It would be useful to have short *Notes*, critical and explanatory set at the foot of the pages, where they may appear to be wanted.—And there is reason to believe that it might be of service to religion, if some particular parts of the sacred writings, now lying in some confusion, and out of their natural order, were reduced to their proper situation. This would no way interfere with the design and usefulness of the holy Scriptures, but be a means to set them in a better light, and make them more serviceable to the ends, for which they were written.—Nor would it in the least disparage, or tend to defeat that design, if proper liberty was taken to connect some parts of the sacred *History*, and bring them under one regular view, *in the method of reading them in public*: [Which I presume is what the authors intended; and which therefore, if this be their meaning*, must be a very useful proposal; as it will help to give us a more uniform idea of the sacred history, and shew us the proper connection of its parts, &c.—*Practical comments* (drawn up by authority) upon some select portions of Scripture, might be proper to be read

* Our meaning will be understood at once, as far as it relates to instruction in public, by looking into the method taken by the Church at *Neufchatel* in reading the books of *Samuel*, *Kings*, and *Chronicles*, &c. Which may be seen in Mr. *Ostervald's* arguments of the books and chapters of the Old Testament.

in public for the instruction of ordinary congregations.—Several of the *apocryphal* books are past all just defence, upon the foot of reason and truth ; and yet are solemnly read in our churches.—Our Bibles and Common-prayers are often very *incorrectly printed*. A fault this, of very ill consequence, and one that has been often complained of, sometimes by Convocation, in addresses to the Sovereign. A timely remedy should be applied.

II.

Our public service, especially in Sunday-mornings, being much too *long*, it would be proper to have it contracted.—It is improper and inconvenient that *three distinct services* (repeating the same addresses, and intended by the Church to be read at different times) should be read altogether, at one time, or during one solemnity of public worship.—No just reasons can be given for repeating our *Lord's Prayer* so often as we do.—Nor doth it seem altogether necessary to recite the *Glo. Patri* so frequently.—The confounding of some particular services, on certain *festivals*, doth occasion several tautologies and improprieties : Which cannot otherwise be remedied, than by reducing our various offices into one uniform method, suitable to right reason, and to the design of sacred worship.

III.

Our present manner of reading the *Psalms* (*viz.* promiscuously, and without due discrimination) is on many accounts inconvenient, and cannot be justified upon the foot of reason.—Our two *translations* of the Psalms sometimes interfere with one another. One good translation would seem sufficient, and would probably much better answer the design of the Church and of Religion.—The subject
of

of *psalmody* should not be confined to the book of psalms only, there being so many other passages in the Scripture, excellently fitted for the purpose, and so many subjects proper for Christian hymns.—Our service might be usefully improved, by having a greater variety of *hymns* and *thanksgivings*.—An hymn or psalm sung at the celebration of the communion, would be extremely proper. [Standing up at the *singing*, as well as at the reading of psalms, is a laudable custom observed in some foreign Churches, and would not misbecome our own.]—It is high time that our old version of the *singing-psalms* should be discarded, and a better admitted in its room.

IV.

Our *Lessons* are many of them ill chosen, and improper for mixt congregations. Some begin too abruptly, others end improperly. Some are extremely short, others of a very disproportionable length. The same lessons, or other like portions of Scripture, sometimes return in a short space after they had been read before. And sometimes the very same portion is appointed to be read twice on the same day (as it may happen) and during the same service. [See some instances of this kind in the *Appeal*, N°. XIII. besides those in the *Disquisitions*.]—Several of the *Epistles* and *Gospels* might be better selected, and should be more properly introduced. Such small portions, as the service is now read, seem less necessary for the instruction of a congregation. And there are some inconveniences in dividing the Scripture into so many minute parcels.

V.

The *Athanasian creed* seems very little suited to answer the intent of Christian worship, and might therefore be very well omitted in our assemblies:
What

What is necessary for all Christians to know and believe, might be drawn up in fewer propositions, and expressed in plainer terms. A specimen may be given, as taken from this very creed.—Our *catechism* should be revised and improved : And a *larger* one is wanted, for the instruction of young persons preparing for confirmation.—Our *collects* also stand in need of a review, there being many defects and some improprieties in them. The *repeating* of the same collect twice in the same service, (or during one assembly) seems to be unnecessary, and is not agreeable to the design of the Church.—The words *Lighten our darkness*, and,—*to the beginning of this day*, as now commonly used in our Churches (being confessedly *out of time*) are justly thought by many to be highly improper, and therefore to require amendment.—*Workest great marvels*, is understood by few comparatively ; and *most religious* by none. These and the like expressions, being scarce capable of just defence, or such as will give general satisfaction, had better be altered, than retained, in a book designed for general use.

VI.

The *Litany* (which seems to come in somewhat abruptly and improperly, as it is now used) may deserve a review : As may also the *Communion-office*, particularly the *exhortations* ; which have some expressions in them much too harsh. The reiterated use of the *words at the delivery of the elements*, as addressed to every communicant separately, seems not to be necessary, and is attended with inconvenience in large communions.—The office of *confirmation* is capable of some amendments and improvements, and may deserve consideration at a review.—The office of *matrimony* calls for a revival in several instances ; which have long given offence, and have never been sufficiently

sufficiently cleared.----The office of *visiting the sick* is far from being a compleat one, and hath in it some very exceptionable passages.——In the office of *thanksgiving of women*, the *psalm* should consist of select passages, better adapted to the occasion, than those which are now enjoined ; some of which are judged to be very improper. And the *collect* also might be improved, and made more affecting and more useful than it is.——The office of *infant-baptism* is liable to many and just exceptions ; and seems better calculated for adults than for infants.——The office of *Sponsors*, being now so much perverted from the original design, answering no useful purpose, and scarce capable of being rectified, under the prevalence of present disorders, may very well be dropt ; and considering some inconveniences, it seems better that it should.——The making of *private baptism* in some cases necessary, can hardly be thought consistent with the gracious design of the Gospel, and is frequently attended with inconveniences.——The Church having allowed of the *immersion* of adults, has made no provision for baptisteries proper for that purpose.——In the *burial-office* are several things, which have given great and just offence for a long time, and call loudly for a review and alteration. This office cannot possibly be applied, with any tolerable propriety or good conscience, to the case of all who are brought to be interred, and, in this undisciplined state of the Church, is but too seldom applicable to any, according to the real import of its expressions, and the first design of the Church in compiling it.——The formal wish, and some other things, in the *commination-office*, may deserve to be reconsidered. Some expressions seem to be highly improper for a mixt congregation : And it may be thought unreasonable to enjoin men to say before
 God

God in prayer, what they cannot say to one another in conversation with truth and a good conscience.

VII.

We want a further supply of several *occasional-offices* ; as, for excluding unworthy members, and re-admitting penitents ; for receiving profelytes ; for re-ordination in some cases ; for prisoners ; for the execution of criminals ; for the due observation of the Lord's-day, and due receiving of the Lord's-supper ; [for the ember-weeks, might be added] and an authorised form for family-worship.—We also want more *occasional prayers* and *thanksgivings*. A form before sermon, properly fitted, might be useful. Another for women with child, drawing near the time of their labor, and requesting the prayers of the congregation. Another for the sick, there being no provision at present for any to be read in our churches.—The *calendar*, and many of the *rubrics*, stand in need of a review ; and some new rubrics might be added.—The *prohibition of matrimony* at certain times of the year has no foundation in reason or the Bible, and is inconsistent with both. A protestant Church may very well dispense with the observance of several old popish canons.

VIII.

Several of our 39 *articles* are liable to very just exceptions, and may deserve a revisal. A more complete body of articles, better adapted to present occasions, might easily be compiled, and may seem on some accounts necessary ; tho' some Churches have none, and are at peace. Articles should be few and plain, founded upon Scripture only, not upon human systems, or the bare opinions of men. Our sixth article alone, if properly enlarged and improved, might seem to be sufficient for all the just purposes of subscription in a Christian Church.—The enforcing of subscription upon young and raw novices

vices, who are not instructed in these articles, cannot be thought right, upon the foot of reason and common understanding.——The present *forms of subscription* are in many respects inconvenient, and might be rendered less exceptionable and less embarrassing to mens consciences; according to the proposals of some eminent members of our Church, whose judgment and probity will admit of no dispute.

——The book of *Homilies* has some exceptionable passages, and is neither for matter nor language so well suited as might be wished, to the occasions of the present times. It might of great use to have a new set of homilies, which should contain all the necessary articles of faith, and rules of practice, delivered in plain language, suitable to every capacity, and edifying to all.——The neglect of *catechising*, so generally connived at, and now almost become universal, is no way to be accounted for, or justified, upon the principles of the Church of *England*; and the consequences of it are apparently very fatal to religion: Which will never be recovered without a resolute revival of this practice, and a steady perseverance in it: more useful and more necessary in the main than preaching.——Many of our present *canons* are very improper to be continued in a protestant Church. And the *oaths* of our *Church-wardens* are no less so, being the occasion (it is to be feared) of many perjuries, and therefore extremely prejudicial to the interest of civil society, as well as of the Church established in this land.

IX.

There are several flagrant *grievances* in the Church (besides those already mentioned) which call aloud for redress; such as the abuses in our *ecclesiastical courts*; the want of Christian *discipline*, according to the appointment of our Lord; the undue allowance
of

of *plurality* and *non-residence* in many cases ; the prevailing nuisance of uncanonical contracts, commonly called *simoniacal* ; the case of *curacies* (often a very bad one ;) of the *education* of young persons intended for the ministry ; of the *insufficient provision* for the maintenance of ministers ; and of the very *incommodious settlement* of that provision, worse if possible, than the former : The case of *Dilapidations*, attended with so many ill consequences ; and tho' remedied in *Ireland*, neglected in *England*. To all which may be added the unhappy situation of many poor Clergymen, when grown *infirm and past their labour* ; for whose relief our legislature hath as yet made no provision, nor for the due supply of their Churches.

From this brief survey of the work intituled *Free and candid Disquisitions*, we may now very reasonably venture to conclude, that the *objection* we have been examining, falls short of its aim, and that it is founded more upon prejudice than truth ; being industriously propagated by a set of men, who either have never read the *Disquisitions* themselves, and make it a practice to retail their notions at second hand from others,

Plusque ex alieno jecore sapiunt, quàm ex suo ;

or else are resolved at all adventures to militate against a cause which militates against Them, and which will give no quarter to sloth, and bigotry, and deformity in the Church.

Turning then from these gentlemen, and applying to impartial men, I would only desire this favour of them : If you can discern any one article, amongst all that have been laid before you, which you cannot believe to have been honestly intended for the service of the Church, and which you really believe will do it disservice ; point it out, shew the ill consequence, and

and explain your reasons : And then I dare engage, from what I have hitherto seen of the ingenuity of these writers, that they will readily retract it, and never desire that it should be regarded any more."

7. ' Your observations are not *new*. They have been already considered, and many *answers* have been given. Those answers ought to have been attended to; and it is sufficient to refer to them still for satisfaction. There is no need of writing any more upon the subject, by way of answer to what you have offered.'

If *satisfactory* answers had been already given, the Disquisitions had never been written. If *no* such answers have been given, there was reason for writing them. If none have been given since, there may be reason to suppose that none can, or will at least be given in haste. We have waited a sufficient time, and have hitherto been disappointed. What little has been offered, is just the same as formerly, and consequently can give no more satisfaction to rational minds, than former answers have given. What have been usually called *Answers*, are oftentimes no answers at all. Nothing can properly be deemed an answer, either to a query or to an objection, but what will clear the whole point in question, and every part of it, and give just and solid satisfaction to a fair and reasonable inquirer. This has not as yet been done, whatever may be done hereafter, in reference to the present case. We desire only clear answers, such as will thoroughly remove all grounds of doubt and uneasiness, such as will satisfy the unprejudiced reason of man, such as will fairly convince the judgment, upon impartial examination; and, finally, such as cannot be replied to with any colour of reason and truth. When such answers are given, the authors of the Disquisitions will trouble themselves no further,
and

and will be as content and well pleased as any people in the kingdom.

But the truth is, their application hath been mistaken. They did not write as objectors, but as free and candid inquirers, and sincere well-wishers to the Church, in whose communion they have always lived. They did not seek for new arguments, nor concern themselves about the old ones. There was enough and too much before them, which would naturally suggest what was and ought to be rectified. They took their sense of things, from what they saw themselves, and had long been acquainted with. They framed their observations upon them, as they naturally occurred, and as reason directed. They had no occasion (as they told you) to concern themselves with what had been written before. They consulted their own judgment, and found it was not satisfied: And when they consulted Writers, who had proposed to give satisfaction, they observed that they fell short of the point, and either gave no satisfaction, or very little, to answer the demands of a sincere conscience, of a love of truth, and of impartial reason. They therefore continued to form their observations, and have offered them for the most part in the way of inquiries. Their scheme is very different from those of former writers. They have written in their own way, and proceeded upon another plan. They have taken notice of nothing, but what appeared to be really wrong. They have fixed only upon such things, as were commonly complained of in the Church, and by members of it. Nor have they pointed out any other imperfections in her, but those which are visible to every eye; which are a blot at least, if not also a scandal to her; and which the best pens hitherto have not been able to justify. To confirm their own sentiments, they have laid before the Public the sentiments of others, of men above
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all suspicion of the want of either learning or judgment, or a sincere and disinterested regard for the welfare and prosperity of the Church : tho', if such writers had never been, they would have gone on with their work ; and reason would have been the same, whether supported by testimonies or not.

Since then the arguments proceed upon reason only, and have no regard, as they are now managed, to what hath been written formerly or more lately, and call upon the Public to attend to plain facts, and authentic evidences ; it seems reasonable to expect that we should be referred, not to former answers, if indeed any answers have been given, but to new ones which may be now preparing, and which there may be just reason to believe will be satisfactory, and give entire content to reasonable and honest minds. The present arguments being either new, * or formed upon a new plan, and all the way supported with what appears to the generality to be reason, ought, in the judgment of indifferent minds, to be answered, if they can be answered, with arguments that are new, or at least fetched from other topics, and framed after a different manner from those which have been already offered. Till this is done, it is needless, and with leave be it spoken, it is impertinent, to refer us to any thing that hath been said before. Which when we look into, and consider a second time, it only convinces us the more, that our

* Nothing that is here intimated, will, by candid men, who are willing to consider things with equity, be deemed any way inconsistent with any preceding declarations. Let us not, we beg, be forced upon explaining ourselves further, where there can be no occasion. The least grain of candor, and of impartial judgment in our readers, will render this unnecessary. The case is the same in all other instances, as far as we can be allowed to understand our own meaning, and to have one uniform view in what we offer.

pains are thrown away, and that our further inquiries are to no purpose.

After what hath been here premised, the following complaint of some worthy *Clergymen* may deserve consideration.

— “ It can no longer be concealed, nor ought it to be dissembled, that many serious persons amongst us have been in great perplexity since they considered the *Candid Disquisitions*. We have been expecting answers, we have been expecting directions ; but in vain. It is generally believed, that no just answers can be given ; and as for directions, the best that have been tendred upon this great ocoasion, have served but to amuse us. For this is all the comfort we receive under our difficulties, — *Consider the answers that have been already given.* Answers, we are at a loss to know, to what? to the *Disquisitions*? None have been given, or none that can administer the satisfaction that is wanted. And as to *former* answers, they are now out of time, they do not come up to the present purpose, nor disprove the pretensions of the late inquiries, but rather confirm them. So that we are now in a worse case than we were before. Those answers contented us pretty tolerably till lately, when we have been called to a stricter and more close attention. From that time forward, we have been left destitute, and know not whither to have recourse for satisfaction. If we look up to our superiors, they seem to have forgotten us, and from them we are to expect no relief under our difficulties : If we apply to our equals, they are involved in the same case with ourselves, only many of them seem to be less sensible of the distress. What therefore has been suggested by some (who may be supposed not to have read the *Disquisitions*, or not with the same attention with which we and many more have done) is very far from doing service, and rather perplexes
us

us the more ; viz. ' that it may be adviseable for us
 ' to consult the treatises that have been already writ-
 ' ten, to see what speculations they can furnish, to-
 ' wards giving content to our minds.' Why seri-
 ously, if we had not a far better opinion of those from
 whom this intimation comes, we should have been
 tempted to look upon it as intended only for a ban-
 ter : And after all, putting the most favourable con-
 struction we can upon it, we can discern no other
 view it has, than to divert our attention a while ; to
 put us off a little longer from clamouring ; and to
 shew a semblance of paying some decent regard, both
 to the application of the *Disquisitions*, and to the ef-
 fect which they are so well known to have had upon
 mens minds. The true *English* of such an intimati-
 on, we are well persuaded, is only this : " Look
 ' ye, friends ; the matter is confessedly of moment,
 ' nor can we fairly deny it to be reasonable to attend
 ' to it. But—for the present, we know not what to
 ' say to it. You must judge for yourselves, or ap-
 ' ply for advice to others. If the old responses will
 ' not do, it is presumed none will.' A tacit acknow-
 ledgement, we think, that all is not well, and that
 some things gravel, not a little.

Now since the chief stress seems to be laid upon
 former eclairsissements, and more modern and better
 ones are not to be expected, it may be worth while
 to look back a little, and take a survey of particulars,
 to see what sufficient answers, or whether any at all,
 have been given to several of the articles contained in
 the *Disquisitions*. If it shall appear upon this survey,
 that some, nay many of the articles, have never been
 touched upon at all, by any of our writers, and that
 others have been handled but insufficiently, and in a
 manner that will not now give satisfaction ; what
 shall we think of the gravity of those persons, who
 would recommend it to us to bestow our time in

searching either for what never was, or what would not answer our purpose, if we found it?

What answers, for instance, have been given to the numerous arguments in favour of a new *translation of the Bible*? [Is it proper (to put the question here for once) to refer us to answers on this head, for which we know not in the whole world where to make inquiry?] Or what answers have been returned to the frequent and just complaints against the awkward *divisions of our Bible* into such chapters and verses as we have at present? — Or what objection has been made against reviewing their *contents*; against *observations* and reflections; against useful *notes*; against a more just *arrangement* and connection of some parts; against *practical comments* upon select portions; or against a more *correct printing* of our Bible and Liturgy?

Again, what satisfactory answers have been, or can possibly be given, to the strong and glaring remonstrances of such learned men as Dr. *Reynold*, Dr. *Lightfoot*, Dr. *Prideaux*, &c. against some parts of the *apocryphal writings*, and consequently against the propriety of reading them in the Church? — The referring us to such answers as have been given on this head, seems to us to be no better than exposing the answers, few and impotent as they are, to fresh ridicule and contempt. Which indeed will be found to be the case in respect of several other answerers, upon other heads; from whom you would expect the most satisfaction, but in fact find the least; only always finding matter enough for serious reflection, and relenting concern.

Has any thing been satisfactorily said, by any of the most approved amongst our Ritualists, to the objection against the *length of our service* on Sunday-mornings, so contrary to the design of our Compilers? or to clear up the reasonableness of making so many
repetitions,

repetitions, or of lumping the offices, and creating such a confusion of parts, in divine worship? To us it would seem that things of this importance are not to be *trifled* with.——What has there as yet been justly alledged, in vindication of the promiscuous reading of the *psalms*, of retaining *two translations* inconsistent with one another; and of unwillingness to part with an old wretched version of the *singing-psalms*? ——Who ever attempted, upon the foot of plain reason and common sense, to justify the indiscriminate use of *lessons*, and to maintain that our *epistles* and *gospels* might not many times be better chosen, and almost always more properly introduced? &c.

Has any one been able to satisfy common reason, that the scholastical creed of St. *Athanasius* is agreeable to the *simplicity* of the Gospel; or that its deep learning, and metaphysical reasonings, are suitable for the instruction of unlearned audiences? ——that our *catechism* may not be revised and improved to advantage; that a larger one is not wanted, and can be of no use; ——that our *collects* have no incongruities in them, and might not be altered for the better? ——that the two for *morning* and *evening*, and the prayer for the *parliament*, have nothing in them that is questionable, or that can create any just scruple? ——that our *communion-office* has not some things in it that are too harsh, and others improper? ——that the office of *visiting the sick* is no way defective, nor contains any thing that is exceptionable? ——that those of *baptism* and *burial* are in all respects defensible, and can never occasion any well-grounded demur? ——that the office of *sponsors* is highly useful, does great service to religion, and ought therefore never to be laid aside or discontinued? ——that to the *commination-office* there can be no just exception, tho' it contains some declarations which have been excepted to with apparent reason and truth?

Have any of our Commentators upon our Liturgy, or any other writers of our communion, ever pleaded with sufficient strength of argument, against admitting more *occasional offices*, and *occasional prayers*, &c.? and averred with truth and good sense, that no such are wanted? — or that our *rubrics* and *calendar* want no amendment? — or that the prohibition of *matrimony*, at some certain seasons of the year, is as much founded upon right reason and the laws of God, as upon the arbitrary laws and injunctions of Popes? — or that constant *catechising*, according to the just injunctions of the Church of *England*, over and over repeated, ought to be *neglected*, or may be so with a good conscience, and without the least detriment to the Church and Religion?

What clear and solid defences have we, in all our writings, of all and every one of our present *canons*? — or who hath undertaken to justify the observing of some of them, and the neglecting of others? — Was ever any mortal so hardy as to assert, or so successful as to prove, that the *oaths* of *Church-wardens* are attended with no inconvenience, and occasion no danger to their souls, no scandal to the Church, no detriment to the Public? — Where is the Author that hath justified those passages in the *Homilies*, which are cited in the *Disquisitions*? or hath affirmed that it is a just thing to *subscribe* to them all implicitly? or attempted to defend the subscription of *novices* to *them* and to the *articles*? — Has any thing been offered to satisfy us, upon clear grounds, that our *ecclesiastical courts*, and the management of them, are altogether unexceptionable? — that we retain even the shew, or keep up the resemblance, of true evangelical *discipline*? — that *simony* doth no hurt to the Church, &c. — Or who hath yet appeared, that hath made the least reply to *Pluralities* *indefensible*?

ndefensible? or attempted to refute any one argument, in that irrefragable treatise?

Lastly, would any one seriously expect to meet, in any of our ecclesiastical writers, with an opposition to the honest scheme of mending the most unhappy situation of many of our *inferior Clergy*? — Or who has ever written against the better regulating of *dilapidations*? — against provision for poor infirm, and *superannuated* Clergymen? for the *widows* and *orphans* of such persons, &c.? Or if any had so written, would it be proper to refer us to such writers, in order to find objections to difficulties so highly deserving compassion and relief?

Since therefore there are some observations in the *Disquisitions*, either wholly new, and consequently not as yet answered, or not answered to any purpose, nor indeed precluded; we cannot but look upon it as somewhat unkind at least, if not also unwise in our friends, to remit us to answers, that either were never made, or if made, can give no solid satisfaction to our troubled minds."

Thus far these conscientious persons, whose anxieties we heartily commiserate, as if they were our own; and our own, as may be judged by our writings, are not much short of theirs. Whenever we publish another volume of our *Disquisitions*, we hope to make it appear, that the scruples of men in our communion are not chargeable upon *us*, since we have but done our duty in representing plain facts, and remarking upon them according to common reason, and what appeared to us to be just; leaving others to form their own judgment, just as their own reason and discernment (and above all their conscience) should direct them.

There is one passage in our treatise, which may be supposed to have escaped the notice of these honest men. It was certainly to their purpose to have pro-

duced it. And being so, we take the liberty to subjoin it, hoping it may come with equal pertinence from us, as it would have done from them.——

‘ If on reviewing what we have written, it shall be
 ‘ observed that the several arguments which have
 ‘ been insisted upon, have any or all of them been
 ‘ *considered already*, and received a *full and due an-*
 ‘ *swer* ; let that answer continue in full force, and
 ‘ all we have offered, go for nothing. But if it
 ‘ shall appear, upon a just enquiry, that some things
 ‘ we have presented to view, have never been pre-
 ‘ sented before, or never in the same light in which
 ‘ they have been here by us ; and if it shall also be
 ‘ found upon like inquiry, that several things have
 ‘ *never been* answered at all, and others but *imper-*
 ‘ *fectly* at the best, notwithstanding the favourable
 ‘ reception which the several answers have met with,
 ‘ from persons predisposed to give them such recep-
 ‘ tion : If all this, and a great deal more to this pur-
 ‘ pose which we could point out, shall by impartial
 ‘ men be found to be true (as we doubt not but it
 ‘ will, upon re-examination ;) we shall then hope
 ‘ that the pains we have bestowed upon this impor-
 ‘ tant subject, have not been altogether thrown
 ‘ away ; nor shall we wholly despair, but some re-
 ‘ gard will be paid to our application, as being
 ‘ founded at least upon something of reason, not-
 ‘ withstanding the general prejudice ; and as having
 ‘ perhaps more, and stronger, and fairer arguments
 ‘ urged in its support, than have hitherto been
 ‘ usual in the management of these topics.” *Dis-*
 ‘ *quisitions*, chap. 9. p. 158.

To close up the whole of what hath been offered on this argument, we will here add the words of an intelligent and observing Friend, which may deserve some notice.——“ The present age seems to require, and indeed has a right to, some further satisfaction, than that which was offered to an age, wherein just
 rea-

reasoning was not arrived to that maturity and solidity, to which it is now, under a dispensation of greater liberty of judgment, and of greater freedom in delivering it. Which being an allowance altogether reasonable, makes it also reasonable that new inquiries should be made, and further and clearer satisfaction given, in things disputable, than has been given heretofore, or than the present age can deliberately acquiesce in. But neither is it true, or can be sufficiently proved (if it were indeed of any consequence to prove it) that the arguments in the *Disquisitions* are all old, and therefore (as would be inferred) have all been considered. I shall only say, The objection discovers as much want of knowledge, as of candor. There let it rest. For it is not worth refuting by a detail of circumstances." [*So thought this Gentleman: but others since have been of a different opinion, knowing how far the objection hath been carried, and what important stresses hath been laid upon it.*]

8. 'It hath been objected by some, that the *Quotations* in the *Free and candid, &c.* are partially 'managed;'" [*that is, adds a Friend, by way of comment, for aught the objectors can tell, they may or may not be so: for you are not to suppose that they are always so very knowing, as they would be thought to be, in such matters. Assurance alone, oftentimes, goes a great way with such men.*]

As to this objection, the authors of the *Free and candid, &c.* are in no manner of pain. For they have quoted faithfully, and have advertised the public, as well of their design in quoting, as of their manner of doing it. If indeed they have any where, and in any article of importance, mistaken the sense of a writer, in what they have quoted (which it is not impossible but they may, tho' they do not yet know that they have) it will be acting a candid part by them, and a generous one towards the public, to rectify such mistakes;
pro-

provided it be done with a truly Christian spirit, and with that sincere love of truth and peace, which becomes all writers upon disputed points.

However, those who espouse the other side of the question ought to be reminded, that if it was possible for them to force out of our hands every authority we have yet produced, it would be of no real service to *their* cause, nor or disservice to *ours*. For (as we have often and openly declared,) it is not *authority* that we so much stand upon, as *Reason* and *Fact*. Suppose then we should be willing (which we have no manner of occasion at present to be) to give up all authorities, and should frankly say, *Let them all go for nothing*; what are these Gentlemen now the better? or how is our cause the worse? Reason is still reason, and fact is fact. To these we again appeal, and leave the public to judge. The argument for a review will stand its ground still, unless it can be shewn that a review is unnecessary, and, because nothing is amiss, that therefore nothing ought to be amended. The grand question turns upon this single point; and here we are willing to join issue with our opponents. Let them begin upon this question when they please, and end upon it when and as they can.——But we persuade ourselves that this objection is for ever silenced by what follows, and will never be heard again out of the mouths of any that regard their character, either for learning or judgment.

SIR,

I Am not at all surpris'd, that among the many strange objections that have been made against the *Free and candid Disquisitions*, that of unfair citation of authorities should make one. It is well understood how easily and effectually the best books may be disparaged by crude and general censures retail'd

tail'd in mixed companies : Among whom a false imputation runs the less hazard of being detected, when, as in the present case, a great number of books, which few Gentlemen even of the Clergy have in their collections, must be consulted in order to disprove it.

You have indeed sent me the accusation drawn up in some form under three capital articles, but still without specifying to what instances they severally relate; and one cannot be sure that the accusers themselves have taken any pains to verify these charges, since they might all have been suggested by what the authors of the Disquisitions have of their own accord notified to them, concerning the use they make of the authorities they have cited.

It might therefore be sufficient to refer you back to the Disquisitions themselves for satisfaction on *this* head of accusation : But as you are pleased to intimate, that they have not fully obviated what is here laid to their charge, I shall now endeavour to give you distinct answers to each particular, leaving you to judge of their merit as you shall see reason.

I. ' It is allowed, you say, that the testimonies
' cited in the Disquisitions sufficiently corroborate the
' general proposition for which they were appealed
' to, *viz. The present Constitution of the Church of*
' *England might be alter'd for the better* : But it
' seems the complaint is, that the authors of the
' Disquisitions, not content with this, have presum'd
' to add, that it *ought* to be alter'd, as if that made
' a part of the same concessions, whereas the context
' in many of these books that are quoted, doth qua-
' lify these concessions with a proviso, that altera-
' tions are expedient, resting that expedience on the
' judgment of public authority, to which every man's
' private judgment ought to be submitted." [vid.
' *Disq.* p. 241. Ed. 2d.]

To this I answer. 1. That it is not the private judgment of the authors quoted, concerning *submission to public Authority*, which is here appealed to, but their private judgment concerning the expedience of alterations in our ecclesiastical constitution: This, they allow, might be altered for the better, that is to say, might be improv'd in such sort as would tend to the furtherance and advancement of true religion, and promote the edification of the christian Church; otherwise the constitution would not be alter'd for the better. Now no views or reasons for *not altering*, whether of a public or a private nature, can be so good and solid, as *these* are for alterations: Unless, therefore, the Gentlemen, whose private judgment is cited, concerning what *might* be done for the better, were inconsistent with themselves, they must have thought that our present ecclesiastical constitution *ought* to have been alter'd, notwithstanding that they might think fit to acquiesce in the different judgment of public authority; which however (unless *they* were mistaken in their private judgment concerning the *possibility* of altering for the better) must have been determin'd *against* alterations, by reasons in no comparison so good and solid, as their own reasons *for* them: And consequently, that alterations *ought* to be made for the better, was one indispensable part of their concession. But,

2. The greatest, and to these accusers the most unexceptionable of the witnesses cited in the Disquisitions, have not left us to collect their meaning from distant, ambiguous or obscure intimations, but have fairly told it in plain terms. Bp. *Sanderson* says we have *need* to desire and pray that the ecclesiastical Government may be timely settled, &c. Dr. *Hammond*, referring to the necessary regulations proposed by him, declares, that it were *a care worthy of Reformers*,

formers, and was the subject of his public and solemn petition to God and man, &c. Bp. Stillingfleet thought it a point of *Christian Wisdom and Condescension* in the *Governors of the Church*, to remove those bars, &c. But what *occasion* to desire, and pray, and petition both God and man, for what need not, or ought not to be done? Surely, unless *points of Christian Wisdom and Condescension*, and which are *worthy the care of ecclesiastical Governors and Reformers*, are not also the *Duties* of such Governors, &c. the authors of the *Disquisitions* have made nothing a part of the concessions of these great men, which they have not made so themselves.

II. Their second accusation (as you represent it) is, 'That the writers cited as authorities in the *Disquisitions*, were so far from *intending* by these concessions to urge the necessity or even the expedience of a Review (as is pretended) that the scope and purpose of their concessions was just the contrary; namely to shew, that after all that could be offered to prove the Church of *England* defective in her government, forms or discipline, it was still the duty of every one to adhere to her, inasmuch as none of her blemishes or defects were considerable enough to justify a separation from her.'

I answer. 1. The question is not concerning the grounds of separation, or the duty of adherence; but whether there are really defects and blemishes in the Church of *England*, which ought to be corrected and supplied. The affirmative is clearly owned in these concessions.

2. It is not very decent, nor very just, to represent these great men as unwilling witnesses to a plain and important truth, extorted from them merely by the occasional exigencies of the controversy in which they were engaged. For my own part, I am satisfied

fied, that they sincerely *wish'd*, would readily have *joined* in, and would heartily have *promoted* a correction of such things at least, as they respectively allow to be exceptionable; and may the rather presume this of these wise and worthy men, whose testimonies the authors of the *Disquisitions* have selected, in that there were other writers contemporary with them (neither perhaps so wise nor so worthy) who undertook the defence of the Church of *England*, without any such concessions, or even allowing that any such ought to be made.

3. If by saying that these authorities were not intended to promote a Review, the objectors mean, that the writers from whom they are taken, would not have consented that they should be so applied, I see not how this will diminish the right which the authors of the *Disquisitions* have to appeal to them, provided they are the real sentiments of the men to whom they are ascribed, and pertinent to the purpose for which they are cited. Is it expected of a man who quotes a passage of *Tully* or *Chrysostom* in order to corroborate a particular point, which he has first established by reasons and arguments of another sort, that he should shew they applied it to his purpose and no other? At this rate what would the greatest part of the authorities alledged by learned men be worth? And how this severe restriction would have operated in the case of one of the principal writers cited in the *Disquisitions*, you may judge by the following instance.

The most learned and excellent Bishop *Stillingfleet*, in an Appendix to his *Unreasonableness of Separation*, [1681], gave the public a Letter of the famous Mr. *Claude* to the Bishop of *London*, wherein that worthy person says among other things, ' I cannot believe
' that there is one among them [*the Dissenters*] that
' looks upon your episcopacy or your discipline, or
' certain

‘ certain ceremonies which you observe, as blots
 ‘ [*des taches*] and capital errors, which hinder a man
 ‘ from obtaining salvation even with facility in your
 ‘ assemblies, and under your government. The
 ‘ question here is not about the *esse* or the *bene esse*,
 ‘ but only about the *melius esse* that they dispute with
 ‘ you; and this being so, justice, charity, the love
 ‘ of peace, and zeal for religion in general, will
 ‘ never allow that they should divide themselves
 ‘ from you.” [*Unreas. of Separ.* pag. 447.]

Here was an undeniable testimony in favour of
 the *Unreasonable of Separation*, and full to the Bi-
 shop’s purpose: The Dissenters were sensible of it,
 and expostulated with Monsieur *Claude* accordingly;
 who thereupon found it necessary to explain himself;
 which he did by saying—that “ He had no prof-
 ‘ pect that his letter would be printed,” and that he
 ‘ only aim’d to justify the Presbyterians from a ca-
 ‘ lumny which some charg’d them with, as if they
 ‘ believed there could be no salvation under the e-
 ‘ piscopal Government—being assured that [the
 ‘ *English* as well as *French*] Presbyterians were not
 ‘ such enemies of the episcopal government, as not
 ‘ to yield to it if it were *moderated*, and those things
 ‘ were but removed out of the service and discipline,
 ‘ which are most offensive to them.” [vid. *Calamy’s*
Life of Baxter, 1713. Vol. I. pp. 358, 359.]

You see here that Mr. *Claude*’s aim fell greatly
 short of the Bishop’s, and yet that his concession
 reaches very fully to the Bishop’s purpose, notwith-
 standing his qualifying explanations of *Episcopacy*
moderated, &c. For who sees not that his concession
 in the first letter is to be understood in respect of the
 government, discipline, &c. of the Church of *Eng-*
land as it was *then* constituted? And what is there
 to controvert the Bishop’s right to make use of it as
 a competent authority, save, perchance the liberty
 taken

taken of publishing a private letter without the writer's leave? Which (being a liberty they themselves have *never taken*) the authors of the Disquisitions are under no obligation to account for.

III. Lastly, it is said, it seems, "That in appealing to authorities concerning the particular parts of our service or discipline, which are supposed to want amendment, the authors of the Disquisitions have cited or referred to writers; who are not perfectly *agreed* touching the *same* points; and have produced opinions, as in favour of a Review, by which these authors would not perhaps be willing to be determined, and by this management, have derived upon themselves a charge of dissimilarity or plain inconsistency with their own pretensions."

I answer—Admit the Facts to be as above represented; how will the candor or ingenuity of these authors be impeach'd, unless they had undertaken to abide by these several opinions, or dogmatically pronounced them to be the precise model on which a Review ought to be conducted in every particular article to which these opinions respectively relate? Which is however so far from being the case, that besides the cautions they have given concerning the stress they lay on authority in general, they have in the most material instances, warned their readers where particular opinions are *not* relied upon.

Thus [Appendix, pag. 325. Sect XII.] where Mr. *L'Estrange* is referred to as intimating that the *Communion-office* might be well improved from the *Scotch* Liturgy; they have put a *Qu.* And in the same page have gone farther in questioning the solidity of Bishop *Wetenbal's* criticism on the words of consecration: but still without determining in either case.

If you ask, what use then do they propose to make of these authorities? I answer, to shew that a very expert and able Ritualist of the Church of *England* was of opinion that her communion-office might be improved, and a great and good Bishop that in its present form, it might be criticised; and, from these and other opinions, to infer, that the communion-office ought to be review'd, and, if occasion, alter'd: And surely so far as authorities are of weight, it can be no light thing that an office of such *Importance* should appear to be defective or exceptionable to so capable judges as the Bishops *Cofin, Wetenhall, Fell, &c.* what these wise and learned men agree in, is, that the communion-office might be alter'd for the better. It is of no consequence that they point to *different* passages, or that they do not agree to the amendment of the *same* passage. Let their judgment upon the case have, as it very well deserves, its full weight: If it shall appear upon due examination, that a particular alteration recommended by any of them, would not be for the better, reject it: Leaving some things as they now stand, will answer the ends of a revisal, as much as altering others which really want it.

As to the charge of inconsistency in bringing different opinions; this difference, so far as I have observed, has arisen from the occasion given to learned men, by the obscurity or ambiguity of some passages in our public services, to understand or explain them in different senses. The Bishops *Sparrow* and *Montague* will have a power in the Church, not only to *pronounce* but to *give* remission of sins, and the doctrine and practice of our own Church, in the frame and use of her absolutions, to be conformable hereunto: Archbishop *Usher*, Dr. *Nichols*, Dr. *Bennet*, &c. think the power of the keys declarative *only*, or at least are more moderate. These different

opinions plainly prove what the authors of the *Disquisitions* produced them for, *viz.* that there wants a proper *Determination* in this case, and more especially as our present forms of absolution, partly *declarative*, and partly *authoritative*, leave room to doubt of the judgment of our Church on this head ; which surely in a point of this nature, if in any, ought to be most clearly express'd. If and precisely therefore there is any inconsistency in this or the like cases, they who are so free to charge it, would do well to consider where and upon whom it may light. Upon those they blame, it will not.

Indeed one would think, that if men were not predetermined to contest every thing, no man could mistake the design of the authors of the *Disquisitions* in appealing to these eminent lights of our own Church ; which plainly is, to convince the world in the first place, that, upon the whole, a review of our ecclesiastical constitution is greatly wanted ; and to those with whom authority is principally of weight, the testimonies they have alledged, are undeniable proofs ; as undeniable (I think) as an inference from six and four to ten. To others, who have no need of this kind of influence, who are convinced by the very nature and circumstances of the case, and upon whom our hopes of seeing this great and good design effected do chiefly depend, these testimonies may be useful in another view ; *viz.* to point out where materials may be supplied from those who had well studied the subject, and would have been capable of giving the best assistance to the judgment of the public, had a review of our ecclesiastical affairs been undertaken by authority, in their days.

In deciding which of these authorities ought in particular cases to be adopted, and which rejected, the authors of the *Disquisitions* appear not to inter-

pose; leaving that to our wise and worthy governors, and those appointed by and under them to conduct and carry on the work; being, as it should seem, very sensible, that tho' they to whom their book is addressed, may and ought to be convinced by the arguments and instances by them produced, that upon the whole very considerable alterations ought to be made in our present establishment; yet that upon a careful and impartial review, there may be good cause, in particular cases, to vary (and with great judgment and propriety) from the most respectable authorities exhibited in this collection.

Upon the whole, had it fallen in my way to seek for objections against this part of the *Free and Candid Disquisitions*, I should perhaps have blamed the authors rather for leaving this article of testimonies and authorities short, than for overstraining it. Some of the writers appeal'd to have spoken their minds with an honest freedom in passages which these authors in their great candor have chosen to suppress; perhaps lest they should have been invidiously applied to the dispositions of men, and the course of things in the present generation: And in respect to some particulars, it must be owned their caution is commendable. There are others, however, which seem so well adapted to alarm the secure and indolent spirit of the present times, by a decent reprehension, that one cannot but regret they had not a place in this valuable remonstrance.

To give one example; had the authors of the *Disquisitions* gone on with the paragraph cited in part from Bishop *Sanderfon's* visitation-sermon at *Grantbam*, 1641. [Appendix, p. 257.] and exhibited the passage in *Jeremiah* v. 31. they might have been accused of giving occasion to some perverse and invidious application of it to our present *Clergy*. They therefore prudently broke off in good time.

But had they proceeded with him in the next paragraph to say, 'What the end of these insolences will be, God alone knoweth: The increase of profaneness, riot, oppression, and all manner of wickedness on the one side, and the growth of error, novelty and superstition on the other side, are no good signs onward:' And applied this as an argument, as the Bishop does, for the necessity of a speedy and authoritative examination of our religious affairs in the present times; who that has bestowed half an hour's consideration on the subject, but must agree to the pertinence of the application? Since the premisses from which this necessity is inferred, are not more strongly or more truly stated by the good Bishop, than they are by some of our most eminent prelates and divines, on some late occasions. See particularly, *Archbishop Herring's Fast-Sermon at Kensington*, *Bishop of London's Letter on the Earthquakes*, *Bishop of Norwich's Sermon Jan. 30. 1749-50. and many others.*

If you should ask, how will a review of our ecclesiastical constitution set these irregularities to rights? I answer by demanding in my turn; Can you rectify them, by the means we have already in your hands? If yea, why are they not rectified? And where will the reproach of their continuance and increase ultimately fall? If our *means* are deficient in the present state of things, have you a more likely method to propose, than the bringing the Christian religion into more reputation, by cleansing our national Church of all blemishes, supplying all her defects, and by new encouragements to piety and virtue, new restraints on vice and profaneness, and new and more reasonable invitations to peace and unity, enlarging her borders, and strengthening her interests; and, lastly by this timely care and concern of our governors convincing the common people

people that Religion is not that formal indifferent thing, which perhaps from some evil impressions, taken and enforced by the supposed *Neglect* of their Superiors, they are too apt to conceive it to be.

I am, &c. E. A. P.

After what this sensible and friendly Writer hath said, with sufficient reason and argument, to satisfy reasonable minds, we judge it proper to subjoin a few words in further confirmation of what hath been offered; tho' we might well presume that we may have said enough already, to preclude an objection which will be of so little weight with considerate and impartial Readers.

It is not denied (that we hear of) but the authors we have quoted, have *made* the concessions which we have exhibited. We only ask, Did they make them *seriously*? If they did (which there is not the least reason to question) they have said *so* much, tho' they may have said no *more*, nor perhaps *intended* to say more, in favour of a reform; a reform at least in that particular instance which each of them hath specified, and which each of them judged to be expedient, and not inconsistent with the general good of the Church, if amendments must be made. Thus far we thought we might safely depend upon their concessions, as supposing them to be serious; which we always did, and still do: And further than this, we have not gone, nor pretended in the least to insinuate, that any particular writer intended to make concessions in any *other* articles, where he has not actually made them; tho' an inference might perhaps seem to be as obvious, and as reasonable to be drawn, in favour of a case not specified, as of one that has been particularly pointed out. What one has omitted, or did not think proper to produce, another hath supplied: And from the whole we have drawn authorities

(which we presume to be very just ones) sufficient for our purpose, so far as we intended to apply them, or was reasonable to be expected from us. We have used no guile. Those who think we have, (if any such there be) may, if they can, detect us. We will stand justly corrected by them, when they do this : And they may enter upon the attempt as soon as they please. What our authors have said in favour of good things, we as readily allow, as our opponents do: And we wish as well to the Church, as they, or any others, possibly can,——It is in vain therefore from henceforward to urge the authority of great names against us, or to intimate that those we have cited, have spoken incomparably on the side of the establishment: whose arguments therefore, on that side, ought to have preponderated in favour of it, and to have deterred us from any new attempt to bring this subject under fresh consideration. We have given our thoughts of this (but it seems they have been overlookt) in the ninth chapter of our Disquisitions. Those who are impartial, will judge whether what we have said there, may be sufficient to excuse us.

9. —— I have heard some few (says a Friend) object to your design as follows: ‘ This is indeed a great attempt: Nor can it well be denied that its aims are good; They appear so at least; and many have a favourable opinion of them. But does it not seem to carry somewhat of an air of *presumption*, to meddle with so important a subject; wherein the whole Nation is so immediately concerned; wherein the Church, and its interests, established by Law, are brought under such close examination; and wherein the Governors are called upon, in so open a manner, to consider about this grand affair, and to rectify the supposed disorders: And all this, as far as we know, by private persons only,

‘ or

' or however, such as have not thought fit to acquaint us with their names, or condition in life;
 ' *Ec.* Would not such a work as this have been
 ' more proper for a convocation, or some other such
 ' eminent and learned Body? Which, as it would
 ' have given it a greater sanction, would also in many
 ' other respects have made it appear more unexceptionable,
 ' and prevented a great many prejudices, *Ec.* And why, after all, is this application
 ' made in so public a manner; whereby it is now
 ' become a common topic of conversation amongst
 ' almost all sorts of people, *Ec.* Who, if this affair
 ' had been conducted in a manner less open, and
 ' less appealing to the public judgment, might have
 ' been quiet and easy, and discerned no fault in our
 ' establishment, nor wished, as they now do, for a
 ' farther reformation. Surely it was neither wise nor
 ' kind in these authors, thus to unhinge the people,
 ' to make our Governors uneasy, and (as some think)
 ' to derive an Odium upon them, *Ec.*'

This long objection, consisting of so long a detail of Articles, we shall not now descend to discuss particularly; since several of them have been already considered, or else precluded. It will be sufficient to touch upon a few things, and with brevity, regarding chiefly the main scope.

The objection seems to bear the hardest upon our *Modesty*, for presuming to treat with such freedom a subject fruitful of the most important consequences, and laying it before our Governors in so open a manner.

The affair is confessedly an *important* one, and therefore surely the *more worthy of consideration*; especially if there be any just reasons for desiring that it may be now particularly considered by those, who are best able to consider it to purpose, and consequently

quently to answer the intent of the application which is made to them.

Whom should subjects apply to but their Governors, when disorders are apparent, and pressing, and common, and can only be remedied by their Governors? If the application is made in a decent and respectful manner; if it is founded upon sense and reason, and calculated for the good of society; this alone will be an apology sufficient for making it public; and no other reason need be given for such a conduct.

This is the common method in other cases, and never blamed, that we know of. In concerns of a secular nature, men draw up petitions, present them to the Legislature, and are heard, if their petitions appear to be reasonable, to turn upon things of consequence, to be offered with moderation and prudence, and to have the public good in view. Why is it singularly criminal to touch upon ecclesiastical matters, to represent them in their disordered state, to pray for redress, and to pray for it in the most humble manner? If Religion be of importance, it is surely right to support its cause, and to remove whatever may be a hindrance to its progress: And to this end it is necessary to make application.

Nor let it be said, that it is improper that things of this kind should be exposed to the inspection of the common people. The common people are all concerned; and that in a point of the most interesting nature. Here every man has a concern, that has a soul to save, or that has any zeal for the Welfare of our common Christianity. The more these things are known, and understood, the better: And the more thoroughly they are canvassed, the more light will be attained, and consequently the greater service will be done to Religion. For our religion is light, and ought therefore to appear in its native splendor;

dor ; and to appear in that splendor to all, that all may discern and approve it. Which they certainly will do (or very few in comparison will not) when they behold it in its genuine and proper lustre.

Are not our common people allowed to have a full knowledge of *other* matters, relating to their *temporal* interests ? Why should they be debarred that knowledge here, in things that concern their *eternal* interest ? Are they not permitted to discuss and examine the former, and to speak their minds about them with freedom ? Why not also the latter with equal freedom ? And yet we do not by any means plead for a licentious liberty ; far otherwise, since we highly disapprove of and condemn it. The liberty of the Gospel is all that we plead for, is all that we desire, is all that we approve, in the present case. This liberty belongs to the meanest of the Vulgar. They have equally a title to it, and therefore ought to be equally allowed it, with any of the greatest.

When our common people are indulged this liberty in regard to common matters, (which the wisdom of the state at present allows them, and may it always do so !) common grievances are more adequately understood, more publicly complained of, more universally attended to, and sooner remedied. On the other hand, where no grievances are allowed to be mentioned, none permitted to be complained of, and all remonstrances are prohibited, or discountenanced ; their disorders must increase, and, the only proper preventive being forbidden, must end in confusion and destruction.

As to the *Convocation*, it is allowed that they are the proper Body (as now settled by our Legislature) to consider about the affairs of our Church. But what have they done ? What inclination, what courage have they shewn to set about them ? Why have so long neglected them ? Is it not there-

therefore necessary for others to remonstrate? And could they remonstrate in a more proper manner, than by applying to *this* very Body? This Body is, by Law, our ecclesiastical Parliament. To this ecclesiastical Parliament we have applied: And it is fit that common Christians (those at least of the same communion with ourselves) should be acquainted with what we have done; that they may join their voices, if we have done right in applying on their behalf; or that if we have done wrong, they may publicly remonstrate, and make their appeal to the Convocation, as *we* have done. From henceforward let no man complain, let disorders continue, let disorders increase, and none be so presumptuous as to address for a remedy.

10. — ‘Tho’ I can easily allow you that we
 ‘ want reforming, yet I cannot think this a proper
 ‘ time for applying, because we have no reasonable
 ‘ prospect of succeeding. You have done your
 ‘ parts, undoubtedly, in a handsome manner, and
 ‘ your design is allowed by unprejudiced persons to
 ‘ be a good one: But you see the Governors to whom
 ‘ you apply, are not forward to favour you. They
 ‘ may not indeed disapprove of your cause; but
 ‘ they seem not to think it prudent, at this time, to
 ‘ abet it. And their conduct upon this occasion
 ‘ should with me be a rule; an intimation at least,
 ‘ that it may be less adviseable to proceed. I have
 ‘ not the least suspicion that you have any hot-
 ‘ headed persons amongst you: (I wish there were
 ‘ none amongst those that oppose you:) On the con-
 ‘ trary, I am very well satisfied, from what has hi-
 ‘ therto appeared, that you use a good deal of deli-
 ‘ beration and serious thought, in what you propose
 ‘ to the Public: which to be sure is commendable.
 ‘ Nor do I find much fault with your reasonings,
 ‘ tho’ I happen to differ from you in some points.
 ‘ All

‘ All that I insist upon, and would in a friendly manner recommend to your consideration, is, whether you are doing any real good ; and if there be no present likelihood of succeeding, whether you will not judge it more prudent to desist ? This I submit to yourselves, and am only giving you a well-meant intimation : which whether you shall take well or ill, I shall always remain your well-wisher, &c.’

The *Answer*. — This Advice (from a serious worthy Clergyman) is as kindly taken, as it is honestly intended : And the Author hath our sincere Thanks. For we believe him to be very impartial, and do well know that he is a good-natured Man. We wish we had to do with none but men of that character. Our application would be less opposed, and more regarded. What this Gentleman proposes, deserves consideration : We have considered it : Our answer is as follows. Had there been no need of a reformation, we should never have applied : And since when we did apply, we applied, as he allows, in a manner not unbecoming us, is not the force of his objection, if not entirely taken off, yet greatly abated, by these considerations ? Thus stands the case in few words : It is not denied that a reformation is wanted, and that in several instances, if not in many. We wish those instances were fewer than they are : Some of them are pressing, and the Church is burthened with them : It is really over-burthened, and must sink in time, if the burthens are not in time removed. You hear the common complaints ; and those complaints are not without reason. Nor hath it as yet been proved, (we presume it never can) that we want *no* reformation. What now is to be done in the case ? Must we and our Posterity for ever sit silent ? Must we, who feel the burthens, as being members of the Church, never complain of them, and desire they may be removed ? We *have* com-

complained ; we have desired a removal : And in doing this, we have pleaded for ourselves and those who shall succeed us in the communion of this Church. What harm have we done here to the Church, or to its members ? *Forgive us this wrong*, if we have done any to either. And as to our address, since it was as decent as we could contrive it ; since we have endeavoured to give no offence ; since we have shewn as much good-will, as we could possibly shew, to our Church, and to our Country ; have we acted indiscreetly ? have we done any thing that we should repent of ? Worldly interests apart, we have done nothing as yet, that should affect our consciences, or will affect our Cause. Our consciences are not untender ; our cause is not ungrounded. If either of them had been otherwise, our application had in prudence been forborne ; and neither our Governors nor our Country should ever have heard of it. But the case being as we have represented it, we leave it to all men of reason to judge, whether our application was needless, whether it was out of season, and whether, now being engaged in it, we ought not to proceed, and do all in our power, with the meekness and mildness of the Gospel, to procure that reform from our superiors, which so many besides ourselves, in all parts of the Kingdom, do so reasonably and so earnestly wish for ?

It is true there had been very little thought about the matter till lately : But applications had been made before, made often, made earnestly ; and that by many of the best members of our Church.——It may be also true, that there is no immediate prospect of succeeding. But what then ? Must no endeavours be used, when there is a necessity of using them ? Some good has evidently been done by the application which we have made : And we hope that a great deal more will be done in time, if it be only by removing

moving prejudice, or removing some part of it at least. Why then should we desist, if when we do not succeed ourselves, we are paving the way for others to succeed, altho' at the greatest distance of time? Our first Reformers thought as we do, and would have proceeded in their reformation, if they had been permitted: for they allowed there were grievances remaining. The grievances still remain, after several succeeding reformations. What then is our remedy? *Reforming*. What are the means of procuring a reformation? *Applying*. This we have done: And we, or others after us, will *continue* to apply, leaving the success to Providence. That Providence, we make no doubt, will in time *effect*, what worldly prudence would now *dissuade*; and will make that to appear beautiful and useful in its time, which is now supposed by many to be neither. — We had considered this, and all other objections that occurred upon the subject, before we engaged in our design, and took care accordingly to remove them; as may be seen by our former applications.

11. It has been suggested, in bar of a reformation, ' that since nothing *immoral, irreligious*, or wherein ' the *salvation* of the people is immediately concerned, ' hath been charged either upon our translation of ' the Scriptures, or our Liturgy, or other parts of ' our ecclesiastical regulations; the necessity of re- ' vising them seems less urgent, and consequently it ' may be better to postpone such a work, than risque ' so great an event as that of an alteration, &c.'

So great a deference is paid to those who have sometimes thought fit to use this plea, that, if possible, nothing shall be said by way of answer, which shall give them any just offence; tho' it must be owned to be somewhat difficult to refrain from expostulating, with some severity, upon an occasion like this.

As

As to hazarding the consequence of a reformation, enough has been said elsewhere, and more need not be said here : The point may deserve fresh consideration, and a very serious one. Nor will it, probably, be prudent to postpone such a consideration too long. — To the other point we shall say but little, how much soever we may be inclined to speak our minds freely and at large ; which may be done upon another occasion. — There is nothing, it seems, so far wrong in our religious concerns, as to make a reform *necessary* ; since nothing *sinful* and *immoral* hath been urged, nothing that can evidence mens *salvation* to be endangered, &c. — Here we beg leave to put a short question. What is it, in your opinion, that may justly be esteemed immoral and sinful ? Be pleased to explain your sentiments on this head, and we shall then bring some particular points to your test, and try them by it. Till you do this, we own we shall be inclined to be of the opinion, which we find many more to be of, that the Disquisitions have sufficiently made out the point which they had undertaken to prove, and have incontestably shewn, that some things in our Church are very far from being as they ought to be, and that there are in it several disorders of such a nature, as make us greatly question the truth of what is above suggested, and even to think that there is a palpable mistake in it. But be this as it will, which must be left to every person's conscience ; those who are not satisfied with these few intimations (which we do not chuse should be more explicit for the present) may be pleased to consult the Disquisitions themselves, examine attentively every article, and form the proper conclusion arising from the whole. There are those in the world, many sensible and serious persons of our communion, who upon seeing things represented, as they are in that book, in their true light, have been astonished to
think

think that we could sit so long easy under the want of a reformation, and will probably be much more astonished, if they find it neglected hereafter; not conceiving how it is possible to be guilty of such neglect, and not at the same time be guilty of that *sin* and *immorality* which is so evidently implied in it. But it is observable, that thro' a long disregard, and an habitual inattention, to some points of duty, we become by degrees less sensible of their importance and obligation; and the moral sense wears off, in proportion as we neglect them. Instances of this are frequent, in high life as well as in low, and in every station and profession, as well sacred as civil. How far the observation may be verified in the present case, may be better left undetermined, after the intimations we have given. Our *Church-wardens*, at least, will see reason more than a little, to complain of their *salvation* being endangered, if they seriously consider an oath, which is justly supposed by many to oblige them to impossibilities, as things are now circumstanced. Nor can the more thoughtful, inquisitive, and consciencious part of our *Clergy* judge themselves very safe, when they maturely reflect upon every article that hath been laid before them, and compare it with the sacred test, and their own unprejudiced reason. And it might be easy also to prove, upon a distinct survey, (which may perhaps be entered upon another time) that the salvation of the *common people*, and the rest of the flock, is, in numberless instances, not so well secured as it might be, and consequently ought to be. And if it ought to be better secured, by using the proper means, ordained by God, to promote it; is there nothing culpable, nothing immoral, nothing criminal, in *neglecting so great salvation*? Look around, and see the desolation that is spread over the face of the Land, in cities, in towns, in villages, in hamlets, in short, in every parish

parish where there is not a faithful, a discreet and conscientious Clergyman, discharging his duty with diligence, and attending continually upon this very thing*.

More

* — “ That both by their life and doctrine they may set forth thy glory, and set forward the **SALVATION** of all men. — That they may faithfully serve before thee, to the glory of thy great name, and the benefit of thy holy Church. — We exhort you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you have in remembrance into — how weighty an office and charge ye are called, — to seek for Christ’s sheep, &c. that they may be saved through Christ for ever. — Have always printed in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. — If it shall happen that the Church and Congregation whom you must serve, [which is Christ’s spouse, and his body; which he bought with his death, and for whom he shed his blood,] or any member thereof, shall take any hurt or hindrance by reason of your Negligence, ye know the greatness of the fault, and also the horrible punishment that will ensue. Wherefore consider with yourselves the end of your Ministry — See that you never cease your **LABOUR**, your **CARE** and **DILIGENCE**, until you have done all that lieth in you, according to your bounden duty, &c. : — Your office is of great difficulty : Ye see with how great **CARE** and **STUDY** ye ought to apply yourselves, &c. For this self-same cause, ye ought to forsake and set aside (as much as you may) all worldly cares and studies. We have good hope that you have well weighed and pondered these things with yourselves — that you have clearly determined, by God’s grace, to give yourselves **WHOLLY** to his office ; — that as much as lieth in you, ye will apply yourselves **WHOLLY** to this **ONE THING**, and draw all your **CARES** and **STUDIES** this way, &c. Will you be ready with all faithful **DILIGENCE**, to use both public and private monitions and exhortations, &c.” — Do these words mean nothing? — Can the duties be performed, without constant application, and all faithful diligence, care and study? — Can the **SALVATION** of men be secured, without such performance? — Was not such performance solemnly stipulated for **FIDE DATA DEO ET ECCLESÆ**? — And yet (since we must be so free to put the question) how many districts are there, how many contiguous parishes, which have no resident minister within several miles? Is it possible to perform these duties, and to perform them in the manner that is required, and promised, without residence? without the residence at least of a faithful diligent substitute, tho’ but of low parts, and perhaps lower attainments : Where there is no such Minister resident, neither substitute nor superior, nor indeed any near, (the lamentable case of some hundreds of parishes) we see, we bewail, but bewail and see without

out

More observations might be added, to arouse men out of a pleasing dream, wherein they figure out to themselves a paradise of happiness, and imagine all to be peace, *when there is no peace*. If our Governors, our Clergy, and People, would consider things a little more seriously, and more attentively, than they commonly do, or seem to do, they would appear to them in a very different light from what they do at present, when they look upon them with so much indifference, and can apprehend nothing to be immoral, tho' never so glaringly so, which attends any of the concerns of the Church, and the measures of promoting religion, or indeed rather of neglecting it. To put an end to these observations; if the Disquisitions had even *demonstrated*, (what it was not their purpose to attempt) that some things in our Church could not be complied with, by persons who shall thoroughly consider

out remedy, the fatal effects. Blame now the increasing of separation, of whatever sort, and to whatever division, from our established communion. Blame the total indifference of our people, their total negligence, their total absence, not only from our Churches, but from all other places of public Worship.—Is this now a matter of *no* concern? Is it nobody's care to look after? If any, *Whose*? — *Lord is it I?* That Lord will one day answer, and fix the fault and the punishment upon the proper subject. *He shall bear his burthen whoever he be, great or small*. For with him is *no respect of persons*. These and the like things, being *seriously* considered (and they *ought* to be considered seriously, if at all; *for they are not vain things, they are our life*, and our SALVATION depends upon them;) we presume it will be no longer pardonable to assert, or prudent even to intimate, that there is nothing to be found fault with, or that can be justly charged, as being directly immoral, or necessarily endangering *mens salvation*. *What* is it that can endanger salvation? or is there any thing in the world that can do it? — Suggestions of this kind, it must be owned, have made some people suspect, that this same salvation, whatever is meant by it, if any thing, is but little regarded upon the whole, and is only used as a word in course, to make a shew of some regard for concerns of religion, when complaints are publicly made that it is neglected. It was the remembrance of this, occurring afresh to our minds, that drew these remonstrances from us; much against our intent when we began to consider this plea, and not without frequent reluctances, whilst we were noting down with freedom what we thought of it.

them, without the great danger of involving themselves in *sin*, and consequently of forfeiting their *salvation*; we have just reason to doubt, whether some *salvo's* would not have been found, to make things easy for a time, to lull men into a fatal security, and persuade them that all was well, and that there was *no necessity* for an immediate reformation. Thus we trim, and turn, and temporize, according to present interests; not *considering our latter end*, nor looking forward to the great and awful day!

12. A most worthy Person, of considerable rank, having some account given him, of the contents of the Disquisitions, soon after their publication, by a friend who had perused them, was pleased to express himself to the following effect: 'I have a long time entertained sentiments of the same kind myself: And if the other particulars that the authors have offered, are equally reasonable, I heartily wish the design may take place. However I will read the book. There is some harm to be dreaded from the opposition and perverseness of *bigotted* people; but more from those *latitudinarian* and *infidel* principles.'

The gentleman is very candid, in proposing to read, before he condemns, a book of this kind. It is wished that a person of this amiable temper may meet with some things therein that he may approve of. And if he does not approve of all, his candor will incline him to pass a mild judgment upon what he shall happen to dislike. Nor will it be taken amiss, but rather taken kindly at his hands, if he shall be pleased to bestow some particular *remarks* upon the subject *. From so good-natur'd, and withal so judicious a person, nothing of harm can be dreaded, or expected; but every thing may be hoped for,

* Which he hath since very generously done, and to great satisfaction.

that may tend to the justifying of truth, and advancing of piety : Which is all we desire.——His observation relating to men of *bigoted* principles on the one hand, and those of a *latitudinarian* or *infidel* turn on the other, seems to be but too just. The only way (if any) to cure the former is, to reason with them ; and that in a mild and candid manner, as the authors of the *Disquisitions* have endeavoured to do. And with regard to the latter, if Their prejudices can be removed, it must be, by pursuing those measures (or the principal of them at least) which are laid down in the *Disquisitions*. There is no need of complying with every thing they shall desire ; and it would probably be very wrong to do it. We may and ought to secure every thing that is solid, and founded upon scripture, but no more. When this is done, all will be well. Infidelity will be of less force, and latitudinarian sentiments will be contracted within more reasonable bounds. One great cause of both at present is our want of a *review*.

13. ‘ By the 5th of *Q. Anne*, confirming the Union with *Scotland*, it is provided that the Constitution of the Church of *England* (as then established) shall remain unalterable for ever. Consequently it is in vain to apply for Alterations ; all attempts of altering being precluded by this statute.’

This objection has been thoroughly considered by a learned person, in a paper designed for the second volume of *Disquisitions*. Till that appears, the following short note, by another hand, may serve to take off the edge of the objection, and to give common readers some hopes that the consequence it draws, is not a just one.

The argument really looks somewhat plausible, and perhaps also formidable, at first view ; and, I confess, it did so to me, when it was first intimated : For it was altogether new to me, and I had never

considered it. But the more I do consider, the more I am convinced that there must be some mistake. For, to say nothing of the wisdom of our Legislature, it is to me inconceivable, that such an argument, if it is supposed to place the thing in its true light, could have escaped the observation of so many persons of discernment amongst our writers ; who, since the Union, have pleaded so frequently for farther Reformation. Hitherto, therefore, it appears to me exceeding probable, if not absolutely certain, that the Legislature, in the clauses referred to, could mean only the preservation and continuance of the Church of England upon the foot of its present Establishment, as distinguished from that established and perpetuated in Scotland. For the clauses seem to have a direct and immediate reference to those enacted there, sometime before, in favour of the Scottish Kirk. And it was highly reasonable, that on so great an occasion, our Church should be as careful of her own preservation, as that of our Neighbours was of her's. But that either Church should, by any articles of Union, bind itself never to reform or review, in any instance whatever, or on any occasion, how great soever, is, I own, a thing which I can never induce myself to believe, till I see it proved in so full and so convincing a manner, as not to leave the least room for doubt or contradiction.

14. ' Tho' I confess some things are wrong, and
' might be amended, [instances are given, but in
' things of little or no consequence] yet I am against
' alterations. When things are well, or nearly so,
' they ought to be continued as they are. *I was well,*
' says the proverb ; *I would be better ; I took physic*
' *and died.*'

Objections of this kind have been made by several, and by some of them in print. The true answer, in short is this :—*Where the whole head is sick, and the whole*

whole heart faint, and from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is little or no soundness in the body; men ought not to be so indiscreet as to boast of their being in health, when every one besides themselves can see the contrary. But we do not affirm this to be absolutely the case with our Mother the Church of England: only that she is sick, that she labours under some dangerous disorders, which ought to be lookt after in time, is undeniable; and we can never so far compliment away our senses, as to believe otherwise. This we think sufficient for a general answer to the foregoing objection. But as we know the great stress that is commonly laid upon *proverbs*, how improperly soever applied, we chuse to be a little more particular on this head, giving our observations as follows: — (1.) The case is here unfairly stated, and your *proverb*, according to truth and fact, ought to be thus expressed: “ I was ill, and had been so a long time, upon the account of some excesses and irregularities. I resolved to retrench the one, and rectify the other; and have found myself better ever since.” To which you may add, “ I am now like to live; whereas I should certainly have died, if I had not amended my disorders.” This is the true way of reasoning upon the point, if men will be impartial, and consistent with themselves. The disorders markt out plainly show that this is the real state of the case. And it is mere shuffling, and misleading common understandings, to take the skreen of a true *proverb*, only misapplied. This method of arguing, we think, shews neither true judgment, — nor all the honesty we could wish. But let it pass. Men cannot be long deceived by it. — (2.) It is easy to see why these Gentlemen are against alterations. They own that alterations are wanted in some things, but take care always to mention the least. This is their wisdom. The truth is, they are afraid

of having some *doctrines* examined. And to make the more specious show, they would have the vulgar believe, that all the grand articles of our faith are to be called in question. This surely is not fair. The Author of the *Disquisitions* never proposed any thing of this kind, nor ever intended it. They have remonstrated against it. They have only desired, that the *Athanasian Creed* (being so little useful, and so productive of contentious debates) might be omitted; and also, that some things in the 39 *Articles*, which are now justly scrupled, might be re-considered *. This is all they have proposed, in respect of *doctrines*. Is there any harm in this proposal? If there be, those Authors declare against it: And they are sin-

* Since this was written, the subject has been debated further by another hand. A notable Pamphlet that is now beginning to spread, will probably give men a different turn of thinking from that which has commonly prevailed, in reference to the 39 articles, and the obligation of subscribing them. The title of it is, *Reasons humbly offered for composing a new set of Articles of Religion*; those we have at present, as is there alledged, being no sufficient security to Religion in general, nor to the Church of England in particular; since they may be subscribed by persons of very different sentiments, and cannot therefore prevent that *diversity of opinions*, which they are said in the title to be intended to restrain. But then a question occurs, not perhaps foreseen by the Author, or not sufficiently considered, — Whether those to whose share it would fall to draw up for us a new set of articles, would in tenderness remove the present difficulties, or would not peradventure enjoin still greater? In that case, the remedy we desire, would be a worse evil than the disease we feel. However, this good Man, we are persuaded, had no aggravating scheme of this sort in his thoughts, and wrote with a very honest and benevolent view. His Address to our Ecclesiastical Governors both here and in Ireland, is very pathetic, and written with a truly Christian spirit. If their Lordships will vouchsafe to look into it, they will perhaps see, that a neglect of all applications made to them, in this disordered state of the Church, will require some good reasons to be given, in order to justify such a conduct, before the Public can be satisfied. Possibly another part of our *Disquisitions* (whenever it shall be permitted to appear) will confirm this observation.

cere

cere in their declarations. It is therefore a mean artifice, they think, to insinuate, that fundamental articles are aimed at, when they have declared over and over that they are not. This we freely own, and will always stand to; that all articles, whether found in the Athanasian Creed, or in any other system, ought to be stript of their scholastic nicety, and to be set forth in the plain and simple manner in which the New Testament represents them. Why, Gentlemen, are you so fond of the words of Man, involved in so many obscurities and uncertainties, when the word of God is much plainer, and far more to be depended upon? If you will be content with this, it will lead you into all divine truth that is necessary for your salvation, or that can be necessary for the salvation of the bulk of mankind. For the future therefore suppress your scruples, and forbear your uncharitable surmises and insinuations, till you are sure we intend to sap fundamentals; which, we again assure you, we neither did, nor do, nor intend to call into debate. We only desire a review of such things as evidently want it: And yet it is very possible, that what some of you may look upon as fundamentals in Religion, may not be really so, when coolly and candidly examined. You are generally too hasty, as well as too peremptory, in your conclusions; and it would certainly be better, if you took a little more time, to to consider about them, before you assumed the liberty to publish them to the world, and endeavoured to possess men with an opinion that they are right, when there is the utmost reason to believe that they are wrong.

15. It hath sometimes been intimated, by way of objection, 'That if the scheme of the Disquisitions was to take place, it would cost the nation a vast sum of money to purchase new *Bibles* and *Common-prayers*, &c.'

Every objection honestly meant, candidly delivered, and carrying any weight, hath a right to be considered. What weight this now before us may have, will soon be seen. With what views it is urged, may be matter of farther inquiry. And as to the candor of our objectors, it must be determined by circumstances. Some men object to public designs, not because they have any great care for the public, as their conduct often shews, but because they have a great care for themselves, and their own private interests; insomuch that many times what seems to be objected with a view to remove or lessen some national expence, has at the bottom no other design but to throw in an impediment of a selfish nature, and under colour of favouring the public, by saving it some trouble and charge, to favour ourselves more, by saving us both. How far this observation may be verified, in the present case, time perhaps will shew; and to the decision of time we refer it.

To the point. The objection would have us believe, that it is of great consequence, and therefore the more to be regarded, as the national interest is involved in it. A plausible argument for certain; yet not so just as it is plausible, nor of all that consequence that is imagined. The expence suggested must be either personal or public. If the objection means any thing, it must be supposed to mean both. We will fairly consider it in this light; as including a regard to the public, and to individuals. The *Bible*, it is true, is of concern to all; and the *Liturgy*, to all who are of our communion; but to none else. Those who have no religion, or have no esteem for the revealed, will buy neither; and may therefore be fairly dismissed out of the present question. And when it is considered, that all others are left to their *liberty*, and no compulsion is laid upon

upon any, to purchase for themselves or their families ; this objection will probably lose somewhat of its weight. But if it be the national expence, properly such, that is principally intended, this also ought to be considered, and the circumstances of it set in a due light. Such national expence must be laid out in providing for our Churches and Chapels. They may accordingly be provided for by proper management, without doing any great harm to the nation. For in the first place, it is to be remembered, that the money is not carried out of the nation, but circulates among ourselves, and consequently the public is no loser. It is a gainer by free circulation, as in all trades, not obstructed by monopolies. In the next, it will be reasonable to call to mind, that many thousands of Bibles and Common-prayers are sold every year, even as they are at present ; and indeed at much greater expence than they need or ought to be, considering the case of the poor, and the feasibility of befriending them. This expence, which concerns individuals as well as society, might with some moderate pains of able persons, be brought under some general view, and probable calculation ; as some calculation is said to have been made, on the side of the objection, in the present case. A balance then being settled, the present expences must make part of it, and consequently lessen so much of the sum intended by the objection. Now if, to regulate charges, the method taken by the *Society for promoting Christian knowledge*, in circulating Bibles and Common prayers, shall be taken in this case, the supposed expence will be greatly reduced, and made upon the whole to be very moderate. Some of those who object, may possibly be members of this excellent society ; or if not, may think fit to consult with those who are : And then they will find that

that their objection is of less force, than they seem to think, or would have it supposed to be.

But after all that hath been offered, may not something further be tendered with equal reason?—The objection seems to suppose, or it supposes nothing to the purpose, that a greater incumbrance will lie upon us now, in point of charges, than lay upon our forefathers. For, as it suggests, it will cost the nation a *vast* sum, &c. We beg leave to ask, fairly and gently, Did it cost the nation but a *small* sum on the occasion of former reviews? The Bible has received a new translation 4 or 5 times, The Common-prayer has undergone a new reform about 6 times, or, as some say, who compute with greater minuteness, no less than 16 times. Was this objection, at each of those times, considered in that formidable light, in which it is now represented? If it is a sufficient argument at this time against a review, it ought to have been the same formerly; and then we should have had no reviews at all. But it is thought by some, that this objection is of no older date than 1749; and by others, that it is only an argument to serve a present turn, and clog the wheels of a reformation.—Let this single argument be answered: If there be a *necessity* of reviewing, why should we cast about for means to prevent it? Why not rather encourage and promote the proposal? If we are evidently, not to say palpably, chargeable with *absurdities*, for want of a review, is not that a glaring indication of the necessity? And if there be no want of a reformation now, when, or in whose times, will there be hereafter? Why do we throw all the load upon future governors? And why do we turn a deaf ear to the remonstrances of common reason at present? Will the nation be richer, and more equal to the expence, in future times?

We

We do not judge so in *other* cases of national charge. We consider the *necessary*: We enact accordingly: And common interest requires it. But common interest, it seems, if there be any force in this argument, is less concerned in the affair of *Religion*. - Let religion then drop, and the revenues drop with it. But if this shall be thought unreasonable, so will the objection: For it carries the same force against revenues, as it doth against reviews.

P. S. It is merely by accident, but very happily for the cause of innocence and truth (which a good God will always support) that a new and very ill-natured suggestion, reflecting greatly upon our character, is lately come to our knowledge. We would not for a great deal that it had escaped our notice. For it might have done infinite disservice to a cause, which we had always looked upon as the cause of true religion, and which we were sure we had engaged in upon the most disinterested motives. This seems to be the proper place to take cognizance of it, having some little connection with what we have above produced.——It was a lucky thought of some sagacious gentlemen, that the *Disquisitions* might possibly and not improbably be owing to the contrivance of some *Booksellers*, in order to make a lucre of a *reformed Liturgy*: A suggestion so mean, and so very unworthy men of sense and character, that it deserves no answer, nor shall therefore have any given it, besides this one word, **THAT IT IS ABSOLUTELY GROUNDLESS.** By this declaration we will firmly and for ever stand, as knowing the certain truth of it, and that all the men in the world can never disprove it. Nor will our adversaries, we are confident, ever attempt the disproof. We had no other motive, no other inducement under the whole heavens, to engage in that
work,

work, besides those we have mentioned so often in our book : To which we again refer all the honest and sensible men in the land, that shall think fit to look into it, and will judge according to candor and reason ; to which some of our *Clergy* (we speak it with just concern, accompanied with a generous indignation, extorted by ill usage) appear to be no great friends.——

Οὕτω πολλὰ, καὶ ψευδῆ, καὶ πάντα μᾶλλον ἢ τὰ βέλτιστα ἀκούειν [καὶ τε ἰσπεῖν] συνειδισθῆτε.

But such men shall give account one day to Him that judgeth righteously. In the mean time it will be observed, that such uncharitable surmisers have unwarily gone too far, and by this unfriendly censure have corroborated an objection against themselves. For by the same rule of judging (which takes it for granted that none other than *gain* can be the view of *godliness*, directly contrary to the apostle's character of it, in opposition to *men of corrupt minds*) they are justly charged by unbelievers with making a *trade* of religion, and pleading in its defence, because they get their *bread* by it ; for which otherwise, say the objectors, they would not move a tongue or a pen. A hard charge indeed, as it appears to equitable judges. But is it, after all, a just one ? If it be, let it fall upon the guilty, and upon them only : Such perhaps may be some of the surmisers in the present case. If it be not, let these surmisers retract their charge, and for ever hereafter hold their peace.

Debinc ut quiescant moneo, et desinant

Maledicere, maledicta ne noscant sua.

The following suggestion seems to be so much of a complexion with that immediately foregoing, that tho' we had resolved to pass it by, with the contempt it deserves, we are willing upon this fresh occasion, to take some transient notice of it. We find by the intelligences we receive, that it hath sometimes been inti-

intimated, tho' indeed but seldom, and very faintly, by some time-serving men, ' That the authors of
 ' the Disquisitions, *like all others* (such are the candid sentiments of this class of objectors) must have
 ' their *views* and *ends* in forming their remonstrances:
 ' Which probably can be no other, at the bottom,
 ' than to work themselves into *preferments*, of one
 ' kind or another, either in Church or State. Like
 ' our modern anti-courtiers, &c."

It may be proper to observe, that all objections of this sort come from men, who are *themselves*, what they would insinuate *others* to be. They know their own turn of mind, and think that '*all others*' have the same. These are that shrewd, politic, selfish generation of men, whom our Saviour emphatically styles, *the children of this world*: Whose views centre in their *one thing needful*, making their fortunes; to which every thing else must act in subserviency; and they know very well how to improve as well as to seize an advantage. The insinuation of such men, needs no other remark than this: That those who were concerned in the Disquisitions, are the very reverse of their own character, being as regardless about preferments, either in Church or State, as others are solicitous about them in both, and eager to attain them. The promoting of true Christianity (the only promotion they have solicited or do desire of the Potentates in either) is with them superior to all other considerations. Grant but this, and you will be sure never to be solicited again by them: Their great point is then gained: And all pretensions to further favour will from thenceforward be entirely superseded.

16. Objections have been made to the Disquisitions,
 ' as not being sufficiently explicit in some things, and
 ' particularly as having given no specimens of a *new*
 ' *Liturgy*, which some think ought to have been in-
 ' fered

‘ferred in such a scheme; tho’ others more moderate in their demands, have called only for specimens of a *revised* one; neither of them perhaps attending to the *design* of the authors, and probably both of them unwilling to approve of it.”

How difficult is it to please men that have no mind to be pleased, and have their prejudices in readiness against every proposal that can be made, when any alteration is recommended! Some have objected to our being *too* explicit, and enlarging upon more topics than can well be consider’d at one time. Others now take a contrary turn, and intimate that we have not done enough, and ought to have done a great deal more than ever we intended, or ever thought adviseable for us to attempt! Which convinces us of the justness of that observation of an *Italian* poet,

*Cbi vuol opera dell’ sua far pagò ogniuno,
Se stesso offende, e non contentà alcuno.*

For surely it is impossible to content every one; and whoever attempts it, only disquiets himself, without contenting any one. A wise observer of the various humors and prejudices of men, of which he had had large experience, prefaces one of his Books with these words; which we leave the reader to apply as he shall think proper. ‘Tis very possible that there is not one line in this collection which some nicer judge may not, for some reason, or for no reason, think would have been better left out; tho’ very probably, forty more, who take themselves to be every one of them as wise as he, are of another opinion. They who were desired to strike out what they pleased, agreed so little in their verdict, that usually what one blotted out, another would have restored again.’ The common fate of those
who

who will expose their lucubrations to the Public, upon any subject :

Pro captu lectoris habent sua fata libelli.

Nevertheless, that we may not appear so unmannerly as to return *no* answer to this objection, we shall say something to it, tho' very little. The Disquisitions sufficiently speak their intent ; so that it is easy for a willing mind to apprehend it, tho' for none perhaps but a judicious and candid one to approve of it. A *new* Liturgy was never proposed, but the amending of the *old* one, which may be fully sufficient, and in our opinion, do better than any new. The materials of the present Liturgy (the best of them at least, and such as are the least liable to exception) have been over and over acknowledged incomparable. And better than these we do not desire, nor expect to see, except in the Bible. Let these be a little better methodized, repetitions (where needless) omitted, superfluities retrenched, obscurities cleared, uncertainties removed, and every thing burdensome to the Conscience (to a sober and well-informed one) silently dropt. This, we presume, will content every serious, inquisitive, and judicious mind ; in short every one that is already a member of our Communion, and desirous to continue so : For with others we have no concern, tho' we wish well to all, and do seriously desire that there were but one holy, brotherly, and rational communion in the Christian world. Our Common-Prayer has enough in it to unite us all, upon the terms of that faith, that piety, and that love, which the Saviour of the world hath recommended to his Disciples. For his sake therefore, and for the sake of our common interest, as Christians, and as Protestants, let us willingly remove every thing that unjustly keeps us at a distance ; and render our Liturgy such a complete model of Christian de-

devotion, as may be a glory to our Church at present; and the strength and preservation of it in future ages. If any can, upon good reasons, find fault with this request and proposal, we only wish we could frame a better. The time and manner of complying with what we have suggested, we submit to the wisdom of our superiors; hoping however they will neither be dilatory in the undertaking, nor timid in the execution of so noble a design. With *forming a new Liturgy*, or *reforming* the old, we ourselves have no concern. The proposing and requesting is all that we intended.

Something, we are told, is intended by another hand, and in a small compass to shew that demands of specimens are needless; since specimens have been already given, and those neither few, nor unworthy of notice; because given by persons as eminent for their rank as for their character in the Church. Witness only the proposals made in 1668, and 1689; besides the great numbers occurring in particular Writers, and on particular heads, as hath been shewn at large in the Disquisitions, which have also made references to many others. What reason then have we to call any more for specimens, when we have so many ready at hand, and such as we cannot decently object to, either in respect of their arguments, or of their authors? We are not however without hopes, that some further specimens will be offered in time. But we promise none from ourselves, nor shall be over-hasty to engage in any. There are far abler Persons in the Church, and those the sincerest Friends to the Church and to Us; who may hereafter think it worth their while to consider about this matter.

17. The proposal of *Homilies* to be read in our Churches, as supposed to be in many cases, more useful than preaching, has, by some pious and well-meaning persons, been disapproved as what they conceive

ceive may be attended with divers inconveniences : Which they have particularly pointed out ; doing it with much good nature, and without the least acrimony, or sign of their being out of temper with our proposal. In one of the miscellany papers for November 1749, was a very civil and obliging letter on this head, directed to the *authors of the Disquisitions*. The writer of so candid a piece deserves thanks ; and the observations, which are acknowledged to be of moment, deserve consideration. Fair treatment, like this, will operate more upon ingenuous minds, than a thousand invectives. The one will incline them to attend to objections, and to allow what may be just in them : The other will but fix their resolutions to overlook them, and disappoint the objectors of any answer they may expect.

N. B. *This was written presently after the publication of the Letter above referred to. The late complaint of the worthy Author (who never was considered in the light of an adversary) hath given just concern. Mistakes are forgiven, and friendship is continued.* Jan. 1750.

18. " The *free and candid Disquisitions* have laid an affair before the Public, which is thought by many to be of the utmost consequence. It is certain that nothing has of late years appeared upon this important subject, which hath excited so great attention, and made such strong impression, as this treatise is known to have made upon numbers. It is therefore a point of some speculation, and no little difficulty, (as is thought) to resolve how it comes to pass, that a treatise, so well known in the world, so much admired by some, so much maligned by others, and written upon an Argument so interesting to all, should be suffered to make its way in the world so long, and so successfully, without any animadversions worthy of our consideration. How are we to ac-

count for this? Is the treatise below notice, or is it really unanswerable? Or else, is this remarkable silence to be taken for an acknowledgement that we approve of it, and are willing it should make its way, in hopes that a reformation may come on by degrees? There is something so mysterious in this piece of conduct, that we are at a loss to account for it; and some little remark upon it may probably be of service towards clearing the doubts of those who being no enemies to this design, are desirous of some satisfaction about it."

Altho it is sufficiently understood, and may, upon another occasion be particularly specified, why those, to whom the application was principally made, have hitherto declin'd taking any public notice of it; yet it may not perhaps be so easy to assign a reason why others (especially those who are generally so fond of appearing foremost in a controversy) should overlook such an opportunity of displaying their talent at refutation, and acquiesce in a silence so little natural to them upon other occasions, and those, seemingly, of less consequence than the present. Possibly it may be owing to a just deference they pay to their superiors, expecting that *They* should first, either declare their sentiments, or give directions to others, since the address was more immediately made to *them*. Nor is it unlikely but the *manner* of the address, so mild and so candid, so averse to, and applying so much guard against controversy, as well as dissuading from it (at least in the common litigious way) may have been a check upon many, who otherwise wanted neither ability nor will to engage in such a quarrel. And it is also probable, that the frequent intimations given, that *No Answers* would be returned to contentious disputants, have proved an effectual bar to such persons, whose talent at controversy consists chiefly in caveling and abusing, and whose main strength is gone, when

when they are tied down to rules of this kind. But the common opinion is, that things are made so plain and evident, and are so well supported with testimonies, in that book, that it is a very difficult matter to make a *just reply* to it. And it is also thought that, for the same reason, there is a considerable *connivance* at the contents of it, amongst those whom you would perhaps little suspect to be its friends, and whom, if they chose it should be answered, it concerned to have given direction in the affair, long before this. However, this is certain, that no answer hath as yet been given, that may justly be esteemed an answer, or what can satisfy the reasonable expectations of free and candid inquirers. For this we appeal to all, who are capable of judging upon the subject.

It seems needless to add more in answer to the foregoing inquiry ; which we cannot pretend to satisfy in any other manner than we have done, by representing the current opinion, as far as we have hitherto been able to learn it. The following observations, however, from a faithful friend to us, and to our cause, may very well deserve notice, tho' they contain little more than what we have already offered. " The *true reason* why the affair has not been canvassed, in the manner that has been usual upon other subjects, is this : The point will not *bear* a fair, a serious, and direct debate. This the adversaries very well know, and therefore have recourse only to little cavils, and unconnected censures on the whole ; or, where they are pleased to descend to particular passages, being unable to do execution, they only trifle and prevaricate, and give one no satisfaction in any thing they say. This, hitherto, appears to be Fact ; and I could easily prove it to be so, if there was occasion. As to the Authors of the Disquisitions, unfond as they are of wrangling, I am willing to suppose, that believing their cause to be good,

they would not, upon a proper occasion, decline a *sober Debate*. But they find no adversaries of any strength to contest with. And why should they contend with shadows? When *men* appear, and not *phantoms*, [*an expression perhaps too severe*] they will probably have something to say for themselves. In the mean time they may very well remain silent, as they seem desirous to do. This, for my own part, I am fully persuaded of: A calm, a fair and an honest; a clear, a rational, and satisfactory *answer* to their treatise, written by men of true abilities, and true integrity, is never to be expected, by those who have thoroughly and impartially considered it. All that has hitherto been offered, is in the loose declamatory stile, and answers no end or purpose, besides blinding mens eyes, and cankering their hearts. One sees a good deal of rancor, and nothing more, in the trivial performances that have been scattered about. The petty scribblers, and petty readers, may delight themselves in them. But men of sense will disregard them. However, it is very well, upon the whole, that they are made public.'

After all other objections, we will take the liberty to mention one more, (altho' it has already been touched upon in part.)——Many who are real friends to the cause of the *Disquisitions*, seem to be rather too impatient for a Review, and thereupon to intimate, (as we may judge by frequent suggestions given us) that more vigorous measures ought to be taken, and that we are rather too calm and timid. We understand the intimation well enough, but shall say nothing to it here, having said enough elsewhere, to apologise for our conduct. When our friends shall be disposed, by making an application of the same kind with ours, to second our cause, they may take their own measures, and use a freedom which we did not think it prudent at first to do, whatever
we

we may do hereafter. The blame is not ours, if we are not heard : For we have done our part, as far as we intended to go, in what we have hitherto proposed. Nor will we say, that the blame lies altogether upon our Superiors, whatever many may think, and may be pleased to say, upon observing the neglect. We would willingly say something in favour of both sides. Those who are so desirous of a Review, have certainly a reason for it, and a just one. The reason is evident, seldom disowned, and never contradicted, or but imperfectly, by any. This is enough. On the other hand, is there nothing to apologize for those who have power, and will not enter upon a review ? Private reasons, if any such there be, must be left to themselves. With such reasons we have no concern, nor could perhaps enter into them, if we were desirous, as we are not, so to do. Private, as well as public reasons, against the advancement of religion, will one day appear. In the mean time, however, one reason seems to be pretty apparent, and ought not to be concealed from such as seem to be less acquainted with it. We have hitherto made but an opening. We have promised some further observations ; which will be laid before the Public in due time. We may therefore very well suppose, and ought in reason to believe, that those in power may judge it prudent to stay, till they hear our reasons out, and till they shall be better able to form a judgment upon the whole, from what shall be urged against us. This seems fair and equitable, if this be indeed the case. And that it is not so, we can by no means presume to assert. It cannot however be much longer, we believe, before this dubious affair be brought to an issue, either in the way of continued neglect, or of resolute action. The latter of which we ought sincerely to pray for. Which is all that can well be done by inferiors, in addition to what

hath been done already ; begging also direction and a blessing on what may be done hereafter.

We have done for the present with our survey of general objections against the *free and candid Disquisitions*. Some few more have indeed occurred ; but being of a nature somewhat different from these, they are reserved to be considered (if it shall be judged necessary to consider them) in *another* volume of that work. It is hoped that enough hath been said here, to prevent the *renewing* of any of the foregoing objections. If not, we are very willing to hear what can be said, in the way of a just and candid reply, by any who are not satisfied. For we only desire to be better informed, where any may think us to be wrong, and can inform us better. Let all indecent reflections, we beg, be forborne for the future ; and nothing but the cause itself, and its real merit, be considered. To go further than this, would only be creating a *controversy* ; which we desire to avoid. And to insult us now, after we have given our final answer, in this *last* part of our *Appeal*, (wherein we have said as much as we could judge to be necessary) would, in some sort, be like insulting over the ashes of the *dead* : Which is always lookt upon as ungenerous at least, to say nothing worse of it. We reasonably suppose, that all material objections, against our scheme in general, either have appeared, or ought to have appeared before this time. For our treatise hath lain before the Public, not much short of two revolutions of the Sun. If the great and worthy Person, who is said to have that treatise under consideration, in order to answer it, either by himself, or by others whom he shall think fit to direct, hath any more and stronger objections to offer, there will be no other disadvantage arising to our Cause from thence, than this ; that this great authority may silence, where it cannot perhaps convince us. To con-

conviction we desire to be always open; to authority we desire to pay a just regard.

It will be observed, that we preclude no answers, either from ourselves or others, by any thing we have here said. But we ourselves shall make none, where we shall think none to be necessary. If ever we make any, (which will be only upon great constraint) we shall hope to shew ourselves so far dutiful to the rules of our Church, as to observe her direction: 'As touching evil-answering, although we be never so much provoked by other mens evil-speaking, yet we shall not follow their frowardness by evil-answering, &c.'

N U M B. XIII.

The sentiments of some Divines in the Country, concerning the importance of a farther reformation: In a Letter to the authors of the Candid Disquisitions and Appeal, &c. With a few occasional glances upon some Objections.

GENTLEMEN,

IN some parts of your late Writings, you seem to express a very proper wish, that the Clergy in their several districts would concur with you in your application to the Governors, and endeavour to strengthen and support it, by declaring their desire of a reformation, upon a fair and serious inquiry, to be equally earnest with yours. We who take the liberty of addressing you on this occasion, having maturely weighed your reasonings, do declare with much pleasure, that we have the cause you espouse entirely at heart, and do therefore with the greatest sincerity wish and pray for its success. We hope many others of the Clergy, in different parts, will join us, if they have not already taken the lead, and offered you better reasons in support of your design, than we can offer. We will, however, try our fortune,

and try your patience and candor, in accepting and considering what we send. All your friends in this part of the kingdom, who are neither few nor inconsiderable, either for judgment, station, or weight in their place, do rejoice in your attempt, and will continue to rejoice, and so further your good endeavours, where they well can, so long as you conduct them in the sober, rational, and dispassionate manner in which you have hitherto done; and which, they make no doubt, you will always do, both for your own credit, and the better success of your cause.

Some of them in particular, from the many private intimations given by persons of great worth and dignity, that your Proposal for a farther Reformation was judged neither improper nor insignificant in itself, nor yet out of time, had conceived just expectations, that after it had been a while seen and considered, it must at length be well received by the Public, and meet with the countenance and approbation of our Governors; notwithstanding some few angry Objections, and unfair surmises, (which must ever be expected in attempts of this kind, even from many of those men who are to be most eased and advantaged by them;) especially as one of the chief Pleas against you, from the unalterableness of the Act of Uniformity, has lately been removed by the Legislature; and which we trust will lead the way to farther Explanations of more consequence and universal Benefit.

Your setting out and persevering in the true spirit of meekness, which none of your warmest Adversaries are able to gainsay, has cleared you from the suspicion of any indirect views, and justified both your Intentions and your Conduct to the world; and as to the apprehensions which some of the more sagacious seem to have entertained, that when alterations once begin, things may go deeper than you ever design,

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or take a different turn from what you are aware of : we reply, the deeper they go, the better, if there be any unsoundness in other parts of our Constitution, and no other Principles pursued than those of healing it. For any thing more than this, you cannot be accountable : Nor indeed is there room to apprehend more in the way proposed ; where all is to commence, be carried on, and executed, under proper authority, and by a regular commission ; which will never be disposed to go any deeper than on a full inspection is found to be absolutely necessary for the health and welfare of the Body Public : And when people are convinced of this, and see the thing once fairly entered on, all farther clamour and contention ceases. Nay antecedently to this, they appear now-a-days too cold and indifferent towards most things of this nature, to be much disturbed at what they are no competent Judges of : Nor have the high Church part of us either so much interest among their Brethren, or so great an ascendant over their Flocks, as to raise that flame which used to be stirring formerly on such occasions : Witness the *little* they have been already able to produce upon the first alarm, when they had the best opportunity. Times are now tolerably settled, and the minds of men composed. No adversary is preparing to attack our establishment either in Church or State ; no alien presumes to interfere in this your undertaking ; how much soever the contrary has falsely and rudely been insinuated in the public papers. Tho' were this fact, we see no harm in either receiving instruction from the one, or advice and assistance from the other, whenever there is occasion for it. And if all, even the most minute objections be now mustered up, that have been ever made since the original reformation (which is a charge as groundless as the former) to our shame must it be that these are still subsisting and in force ;
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and they are produced once more with a plain honest intent of having them at last removed, and of rendering the work of reformation, hitherto so much wanted, as perfect and complete as may be: They are now produced without any aggravating turn whatever, nay mostly on the express confession, and in the very words, of some of the best friends and most eminent favourers of our establishment.

But whatever may be dropt on these or the like heads, against the present proposal of a Review; we are told that something else sticks most with some of those in high posts, both in Church and State, who have so many other things to mind; and that the true ground of any disinclination to it amongst them is (with all possible reverence be it spoken) a dread of the extraordinary *Trouble* such a Review may bring.

As to the *former*, we can never allow that they who have immediately devoted themselves to the care of souls, and have the charge thereof more eminently devolved upon them, and are so thoroughly sensible how much pains are required to it, even in the inferior station of a country-cure;—that they should really decline any part of the same trouble in a much nobler way of benefiting the whole Church at once, by improving the knowledge, and exalting the devotion, by heightening the zeal, strengthening the faith, and most effectually securing the salvation of such numbers, in this and all future Generations. To the furtherance and execution of this great work we will never suppose that these wise and good men can be unwilling to contribute their full share, can either be the last to approve and undertake, or the first frightened and discouraged by any dangers, doubts or difficulties that may possibly attend it; considering farther, that to alleviate these, it is our singular happiness to have the ice already broken, and the

the labour made easy by a great part of the work being done to our hands (as you have shewn) by those very eminent and able Persons who so chearfully undertook it towards the end of the last century, and are believed to have performed their parts in a manner entirely suitable to their high characters, and the just expectation of the public ; and which, we trust, the public will be deprived of no longer by any such sinister methods as then most unhappily prevailed. After such ample instructions and authorities, all that remains, one would think, might easily be carried on in the way which has been always hitherto found most effectual, *viz.* of some select Committees nominated and appointed for that Purpose ; who beside their own observations and collections, 'tis hoped, would soon receive such large helps and supplies from others of their brethren, as well as hints from persons both of different persuasions and professions (which then sure might be admitted, and prove of good use) as to make the most arduous part of the labour proceed safely and with the desired success.

From the *other* part of our Governors, or from the Laity in general, we have no danger of opposition, except when it is raised first among ourselves, when it is formed by weak suspicions of each other, or a carnal spirit of faction, or nursed by that wicked policy of turning a deaf ear to all complaints, and imagining that they will speedily drop and die away of themselves ; by suffering matters to go on as they may for our times, if we can but be at ease ; or rather forcing them to continue bad as they are, and striving to hold all things close and tight (as the phrase sometimes is) which has so often rendered all attempts to reform mankind in any respect fruitless ; till the supreme Governor of the world has been obliged to interpose, and take the work into his own hand.

hand. But we hope better things of this generation, and humbly ask pardon for presuming so far to intimate, or seeming to give countenance to, any hard suppositions to the dishonour of our superiors; many of whom we well know to be otherwise disposed; and many must be allowed to have their reasons for not openly appearing hitherto in what they secretly approve. Perhaps though they be sensible that the cause is good, yet they may question whether there be seriousness, and resolution, and integrity enough at present, to pursue it steadily, and carry it on effectually. But whatever may be suggested to our prejudice in this respect, we trust that on a more full and fair enquiry, it would appear that there is virtue enough still left in the nation to ground such an attempt upon; and we have room to say thus much, from some very bright examples of it now amongst us. We hope that upon trial there may be found as many hearts no less warmly devoted to the same cause now than heretofore, and heads more capable of guiding and conducting it.

'Tis no extraordinary compliment to suppose this, since they have so many superior advantages in several respects. They may compare former measures and events, note every past miscarriage and defect; they have a just model laid, and methods chalked out for them; and above all are clear from all those dregs of superstition and bigotry to systems, which used so fatally to clog and confound undertakings of this nature. We have moreover the benefit of sound comments carried through the Scripture, which will help mightily to mend the literal version, and reform such doctrines as are drawn therefrom. Common sense is now happily introduced into those holy books, and the connexion, argument and occasion of them are more attended to, as well in the professed annotations on them, as in the various critical

cal dissertations introductory to, or explanatory of these in general, and the judicious solid discourses on each capital point and portion. We begin to have more enlarged and adequate ideas of our own, more just conceptions of that blind servile adherence to antiquity *; and find out the impropriety of framing our forms of devotion after those models, and adapting each of them to an eastern Style and Taste, in which was once placed their chief excellency. We have considerable advantage from the late eminent improvements in all kinds of useful literature and general knowledge, more especially theological, which is delivered almost every where, and dispersed through all orders of men, and which as it will qualify us better for admitting such a reform, by enabling us to understand, and apply, and relish it more perfectly; so it must in proportion render it more needful for us, and on all accounts, we apprehend, make it morally impossible for it not to exceed all that has gone before, in many of the most valuable articles.

It must indeed be owned, that an attempt of this kind is very new and unusual to us, and quite opposite principles have long prevailed; though these are wearing out apace, and scarcely avowed even by the few that hold them. But if we look back a little, we shall see many such proposals made and attended to, without any great surprise, or violent disturbance, even when they appear not to have been

* One of the noblest uses which can be made of Christian antiquities, would be to learn wisdom, and union, and moderation, from the faults, indiscretions, and follies, and from the prudence, charity, and piety of our predecessors; to observe carefully what was good, and what was blameable in remoter ages, and thence to improve ourselves, as we are a Christian Nation, by removing the blemishes and defects, from which perhaps we are not free, and by adopting every thing commendable which we have neglected. Mr. Fortin's preface, p. x. xi.

wanted half so much as they are now. How many new translations of the Bible, and reviews of the Liturgy, &c. have we had (as you have well observed) in a few years; and some of these, alas! the most unpromising for such a task?—And how very miserable is it, if this age of light and liberty, must be confined to the imperfect state of such attempts;—ruled by the divinity and politics of *James the First*?

You are far from admiring alterations as such, or admitting frequent and unnecessary ones, or advancing such unlimited licence as would set all ways of divine worship upon a level. But yet, however invariable truth be, and uniformity desirable, human establishments (which though by the circumstances of the world they become necessary, yet are too often real infringements on truth, and contain seeds of corruption in themselves;—these) must change in a course of time, and many things in the best of them grow quite obsolete and inconvenient; and by that means the ancient order and uniformity itself, if pressed with rigour, and maintained tenaciously, may prove too dear a purchase. This, to attentive and judicious observers, will be as evident in the political constitution of a Church, as in its material fabric. Neither of which, without timely repair, and occasional reformation, can be kept from ruin.

Nor do we think you so unreasonable as to expect, that all which you propose, is to be gone upon at once; no, you seem only to be promoting a strict, careful and complete survey of all that is either wrong or wanting; you are opening the foundations, collecting the materials, and exhibiting the parts of the whole work, in order to prepare men's minds for a more perfect structure, and shew them the necessity of beginning somewhere at a proper season: And what has been observed above, may afford perhaps

haps sufficient evidence that this is no improper one, at least not the most unfit for removing some things, which our great and good forefathers, the confessors and martyrs in our first reformation, were obliged to comply with, and which their successors, through an excess perhaps of caution or else of worldly policy, left in the same condition in several respects, in others made even worse ; but which both of them would have abhorred the continuing, had they had our more happy means and opportunities to reject them. In honour to whose memories, and gratitude for what with so much difficulty they did effect, we surely ought so far to tread in their steps, as the different circumstances will allow, and carry on their design so much the farther and faster, as the advancements in these evidently require : We surely can do no less than allow our Church some share in the benefit and beauty of those improvements, which we all see and own.

Whence it is that these two, the opportunities and their improvement, are in the general no better suited together ; how it comes to pass that a strong active spirit of reformation shews itself in some times, which do not seem otherwise the best prepared for it ; and why in others men for ages together continue fast asleep, while the enemy is sowing tares, and when they do any thing, do his own work, by an inveterate opposition to any offers of either clearing and cultivating the ground, or endeavouring to separate the good grain when grown up from among them :—This is a mystery of providence, which probably we have too narrow notions of the true System of things to comprehend at present ; but this ought never to be any motive for our narrowing the view still more, nay shutting our eyes against that scene of desolation and decay, which otherwise we could not possibly avoid beholding.

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In such a case, our part and duty in our respective spheres is evident upon a proper call; nay such a case itself is call sufficient, and both the work requisite and the manner of working, manifested by the general turn and temper of the times we are in, the circumstances and capacity of persons, and the general state of things among which we are conversant; all which help to instruct us how far we ought to proceed, and where we shall most probably meet with success; which yet we may securely leave to providence, well knowing that if, like King *David*, we have *it in our heart to build a Temple to the Lord*, and make due preparation for it, though he have chosen another to build it up, yet he will graciously accept our good intentions, and we certainly *did well that it was in our heart*. But no distrust of the event can ever excuse us for holding back our hands when applied to, and refusing to do any thing; for standing all the day idle, and letting the Lord's vineyard, like the *Field of the sluggard*, to lie overrun with weeds and brambles; much less for dissuading, and disheartening others, from bearing a part in the care and cultivation of it. We have a very different example set by the apostle of the Gentiles, whom we ought rather to imitate, if not in his unwearied pains and diligence, and zeal for all the Churches, at least in his most truly catholic love for, his wishing well to, glorying in and rejoicing over all those who really promote the honour of Christ, and labour in his Gospel, be their aims or their efforts never so imperfect. *What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, and will rejoice.*

In the same spirit we desire to encourage and assist the labours, and are, with many others, willing to bear testimony to it upon all occasions; concluding with our most earnest and incessant prayers, that
 heaven

heaven may send a blessing on them, by daily disposing our rulers both in Church and State, to give a due attention, and pay a just regard, to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ (which we have the greatest room to hope from most of them) by guarding you from every ill effect of that old Anti-christian spirit of persecution, which is alive yet, and ever ready to break out against it; by guiding and directing you throughout the *warfare* wherein you are now engaged for the promotion of it; that your *weapons not being carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds*, may be able to *cast down imaginations and every thing that exalleth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*"

The *other* letter received from the same Divines is postponed to a farther occasion. We endeavour to suit every thing to its proper *Time*, and do therefore flatter ourselves, that neither these, nor any other friends to our cause, from whom we have received any favours of this kind, will either distrust our fidelity, or dismiss their own patience, during our delay of making them public. Their kindness is not forgotten, nor will their remarks be disregarded. There are just grounds to hope that the present liberty of reasoning after this manner upon ecclesiastical matters will not be discontinued. If the volume intended should *not* be published, the forbearance will be owing to a regard to authority, or to an infringement of liberty — "THAT LIBERTY OF PROPHESYING MAY PREVAIL, AND THAT PROFANE LICENTIOUSNESS MAY BE RESTRAINED, ARE WISHES WHICH SHOULD ALWAYS BE JOINED TOGETHER."

N U M B. XIV.

The following spirited Letter, tho' it may contain some observations that occur elsewhere, is allowed a place (as it well deserves) in this collection, because it contains others that do not occur, or not in the same forcible light in which they do here; and also because we would pay the regard that it is due to a correspondent, from whom we have received other letters that justly merit our approbation and gratitude.

To the Authors and Editors.

GENTLEMEN,

Jan. 1749.

IT gives one pleasure to observe, that your *Free and candid Disquisitions* have met with a free and candid reception in the world, and are approved by so many persons of learning and judgment. It is surely a fair sign, that there is something in them worth approving, and that the nation, a good part of it at least, is in tolerable good humour, and willing to hear reason. Men's eyes will be opened, and their tempers softened, by degrees, you need not doubt it. We have too long (as you observe) been a prejudiced people, attached to every thing we found established, whether we had examined it or not; and utterly averse to any amendment, tho' the necessity of it was ever so visible. It is time now to set about an examination. You have given us a fair and an honest call to it; and the reasons you have offered, to induce us to make an impartial one, are so just and cogent, that it must be very difficult to elude the force of your arguments, or acquiesce any longer in those that have been offered to the contrary. Those must be very ingenious gentlemen, that can contrive a proper answer to this book; an answer
that

that will be as satisfactory, as it may happen to be ingenious. I have thought of it often, and must own, in the sincerity of my heart, that I cannot see what answer can be given, so as to remove the difficulties which you have so plainly and so honestly laid open. I am sure I myself, with all the little skill and understanding I am possessed of, could not contrive any answer, that would be satisfactory to my own reason, and which I might hope would be so to the reason of others. I might perhaps, here and there, find some little faults and oversights, and might shew you my reasons why I could not always agree with you. But this would not invalidate your main argument, nor evince (which is the principal thing to be evinced) that there is no necessity of a review. Here I must necessarily agree with you, and could not have the face or the conscience to oppose you. This, I think also, must be the sentiment of every honest and prejudiced man, that will fairly enquire into the subject, and thoroughly consider all those particulars which you have so candidly proposed to consideration. Your candor is indeed to be commended, and will work more effectually upon good minds, than any other temper you could have shewn, or method you could have taken. And it is certain that it has already operated with a more powerful, tho' a more gentle force, than any arguments could have done, dressed up in the litigious and controversial form: Which I hope will hereafter dwindle into contempt, and never be used any more by men of generous dispositions, especially upon religious subjects. I must observe one thing further: You have, by your gentle manner of addressing and arguing, in great measure disarmed the adversary, and taken from him that spleen and that virulence, which he would have been too apt to have shewn, upon an occasion like

this. Will he write with fury against those, who write with gentleness? Will he fly off from reason and sense, when you have so fairly invited to both, and so visibly founded your argument upon them? The man that does this, will too inadvertently betray his weakness, and too glaringly expose himself and his cause. And this method will in time prove the confusion of both.

I know indeed that many are not well pleased with your work, and would willingly expose it to contempt and neglect, if they knew how. This is not to be wondered at. For men have been brought up with prejudices: And it is to be wondred at the less, as few, but very thoughtful men, ever troubled their heads, and much less their consciences, with such things before. We seemed to have been sunk into a state of indolence, or rather of lethargy; and it was necessary to arouse us. You have given a sufficient alarm, and the nation seems to be either awakened, or awakening. For my own part, I believe it will thoroughly awaken in time, unless the progress of popery hinders; which is a great bar to every generous overture towards a further reformation. But our governors, I hope, will take care to remove that bar, and suffer reason and the gospel to have their free course. They will encourage both, and then there will be an end of popery.

If your treatise is to be answered, it can be answered only by our governors. *They* can do it, and none else. If they favour it, it is answered at once. And that answer can be given, only by consenting to a *Review*. This will effectually put an end to your applications; This will depreciate your Book, and make it useless. For none will read it, after the Review that is requested. Why should any one read an old *Almanack*? On the other hand, if the request is not yielded to, your Disquisitions will be read,

read, the zeal of some will diminish, the confidence of others will be abated, and the love of many will wax cold. What further consequences will happen, I am not able to foresee, and am unwilling to conjecture.

Another observation has occurred to me, upon seeing the spread and success of this treatise. It has been out for some time; and no answer has been given it. This convinces me still the more strongly, that it is not so easy to be answered, as some men could wish. For otherwise no question they would have been demolishing it before now. If they let it stand untouched, it is tacitly confessing that the work is solid, and cannot be attacked with success: And if they enter not into the true *merits of the cause*, they are doing nothing, and the work will therefore stand more firm than ever: Because the very manner of attacking it will shew, to all unprejudiced persons, that no just advantage was to be got; nothing to be laid hold of, that could be shaken; and that all its main parts are firm. As to any little out-works, let them go, if they be worth taking from you, and can be fairly rescued out of your hands.

I remember indeed, upon further recollection, that one or two small attempts have been made; but they are scarce worth mentioning, and I make no doubt but some or other of you have seen them, tho' you are more wise than to take notice of them. The first that appeared, was a Gentleman, I do not suppose of the University, but more probably of the Town of *Cambridge*: And it was enough to say *Cambridge*, as that might imply either, and might chiefly be designed to imply the former, to give the piece the greater sanction. Now this Gentleman, to give him his due, seems to me to deserve, tho' he will not probably receive, your thanks. And he deserves them, as I think, the more, because he had

the honour and courage to make the first onset: He stands first therefore in the list of opponents; and that is something: Perhaps it was all he aimed at. The remora from the date of *August* the 7th, to the beginning of *October*, may easily be accounted for. But it is not of moment enough to tell you how it happened: And I know you will not enquire. This Gentleman's *Second* was one of the same spirit and temper, dating from *Newcastle*. It is needless to say any thing to *Him*, because he hath said nothing to the argument (no more indeed did the other, who only harangued;) and particularly, because he hath been sufficiently foiled at his own weapon, by those who could manage it much better than himself: Who having truth on their side, which he had not, found it a very easy task to vanquish so impotent an adversary: And, if I am not greatly mistaken, it will be found altogether as easy to give a reasonable answer to those who shall think fit to appear on the same side hereafter. For truth is always easy to be maintained: The contrary is always attended with difficulties.

But the principal satisfaction I reaped, from perusing these little strictures, and the answers given, was to observe the different *temper* on both sides. The opponents were warm and precipitate: The other gave their answers with coolness and reason: One was indeed a little smart, but at the same time reasonable, and his arguments were just: And he reminded the adversary, of reason and temper, as more advantageous to his cause, if his cause were good. I heartily wish that in all controversies, these two might be observed; and shall hope that all who will appear in your defence, will shew themselves superior to the adversaries, by adhering to these; as I think you have remarkably done, in the work you have set forth; tho' I also think that
some-

Sometimes, either you or some others whose remarks you have inserted, have been less upon guard; but very seldom so upon the whole: And that makes your work the more valuable. It is of great advantage to truth, to be mild in representing it, and to pave the way gradually and gently for its reception. Human nature requires this: Its infirmities are so great. And if gentleness with reason will not prevail, reason without gentleness cannot.

This puts me in mind of one friend, who hath done as much honour to himself, as he hath done service to your proposals, by the mildness of his temper and justness of his reasonings. In a small pamphlet* of the last month, which hath many things in it, on your side of the argument, Mr. *Allworthy* makes these reasonable and gentle reflections, in answer to a very weak, but most flaming adversary, who had never seen your book: 'I have read (says he) the book thro' with
' a great deal of attention, and must own there are
' several things in it, which for the sake of true
' piety, and the prosperity of the Church of *England*,
' I wish were complied with: There are certainly
' some parts of our Liturgy, which, though they
' might be extremely good and proper, at the time
' it was made, yet, from the alteration of circumstances and language, seem greatly to require a
' review. And I think that our excellent Liturgy
' might be made the most perfect model in the
' world of Christian worship and doctrine, if
' mended.—In an affair of so much consequence
' to the happiness of mankind, all heat and passion
' should be laid aside; as it seems to discover that
' party and prejudice were more prevailing than
' reason and sense. And in all religious disputes,
' it is certainly a duty incumbent on the advocates

* *Gent. Magaz.*

of either side of the question, rather to endeavour
 to convince with good nature, than rudely to con-
 demn, without entering into the true merits of the
 argument.—For my own part, I must acknowledge,
 that I do not apprehend that many of the altera-
 tions proposed would impair, but rather contri-
 bute to the greater orthodoxy of our Church, and
 the purity of our worship.—I should be very
 glad to see the Church of *England* the glory of the
 whole earth; and am persuaded that a few inno-
 cent alterations in our Liturgy would greatly
 contribute to that desirable end. The advan-
 tages that popish priests take of some passages,
 and by which many honest and well-meaning per-
 sons have been perverted, may be happily removed.
 Numbers of very worthy members of our Church
 may not then be so much terrified from attending
 the solemn and necessary duty of our sacrament;
 and the people, in general, may be prevented
 from treating the other, as is now almost always
 the case, with too much levity.—The shortning
 of our public service may engage multitudes more
 to attend it; and thereby religion and virtue may,
 by degrees, recover some strength amongst us.
 All occasions of investives and reproach may then
 be stopt in the mouths of infidels and profligates.
 Our communion would then be enlarged by the
 addition of many, who, as some things now stand,
 make a scruple of joining in our worship. If,
 therefore, any method could be found out to ac-
 complish these happy purposes, it would be doing
 the greatest service to religion and society, and
 would make the Church of *England* the praise of
 the protestant world. Wherefore I am very will-
 ing that the christian-like and solemn application
 of these truly worthy gentlemen should be seri-
 ously considered by our Clergy; and that the ma-
 terial

' rerial amendments, wanting to our Liturgy, should
 ' be drawn up by a committee appointed for that
 ' purpose, and published for the consideration of
 ' the public *. And if approved of by the gene-
 ' rality of the people, then our governors in Church
 ' and State may give their sanction to their being
 ' received, and used by all such congregations as
 ' shall approve, and desire them. By which means
 ' there will be no compulsion, and the people will
 ' be left at liberty to use the present forms of wor-
 ' ship, either with, or without the alterations. And
 ' this surely can be no disservice to the Church of
 ' *England*, but rather of very great advantage to it."

There is nevertheless one considerable disadvan-
 tage attending your proposal, which is this. Many
 of the common people are prejudiced against it; and
 that prejudice arises from the instructions they re-
 ceive. As far as I can see, they are of themselves
 unprejudiced, and willing enough to be guided by
 reason, where they are not otherwise directed; as
 one of your friends has very truly represented the case,
 in a *sequel* to one of your sections. It is therefore ne-
 cessary to let them know the truth. This cannot be
 done but by setting it in a fair light before them, and
 leaving it to their own plain understanding to judge of.
 When it is thus represented to them, they will soon
 see the difference, and perceive that there are some
 things which are not perfectly right. This will make

* This has been often wished by many other persons of
 judgment; and the wish seems reasonable. We do not want
 proper materials, nor men duly qualified to form such a com-
 mittee, and draw up such amendments. Temper, judgment,
 piety, are the only qualifications requisite. Old liturgical learn-
 ing (like that of Bishop *Cosin* for instance) is of no use, and will
 rather do disservice. Where the clog should remain after this
 must be left to persons of speculation to find out. The common
 wish will continue to be the same, whether any thing be done
 or not.

them

them the more willing to comply with amendments; when made; and induce them to acknowledge (what they were not permitted to do before) that some alterations may be necessary, and that it may therefore be reasonable to make them. Now, Gentlemen, give me leave to propose to you one thing. Draw up a clear account of the whole affair. Fit it for the instruction of the vulgar, and then publish it. I should think that your own book will make this a very easy task. The materials are all ready, and the argument is plain and obvious, suitable to almost every understanding. Make proper extracts from this book. Pick out the choicest things, and place them in the strongest light. Bring the whole into a narrow compass: And when you have made and published these extracts, for the service of the common people (who cannot well get a sight of your treatise) doubt not but you will convince their reason. And the majority of the people being gained, one of the greatest obstacles will be removed.

If you will not undertake this work yourselves, permit some others to do it; but men of judgment and skill, and friends to your cause. If you will do neither, call upon your adversaries to give a fair account of your work, in your own words, and in your own manner. They are engaged in honour to do this, if they think you deceive the people. Let them tell the world what you have done, and let the world judge. This will be an open and a just challenge. You need not fear the consequence; but your adversaries may. Let them set about it therefore as soon as they please: Or if not, do you do it, or engage others. I am sincerely yours,

A former Correspondent.

[This Gentleman's proposal seems very reasonable. Nor are we unwilling that it should be executed, but by other

other hands, being duly qualified for the work.—There is however something else, which we judge may be of still greater service, and should therefore be glad to see done in due time, after this subject has been thoroughly discussed on both sides. And that is, that some able, judicious, and disinterested person, taking a just and impartial survey of the whole, would give a helping hand to the cause of truth, wherever it lies, by acting the part of a fair Moderator, &c. It is hoped that some good man or other will, at a proper season, engage in such an undertaking.]

Soon after the penning of this last observation, a small but valuable paper came to hand, which seems to be written with a good deal of that amicable and moderating temper, which we have been here proposing ; and being one of the first and best essays we have yet seen of this kind, upon the present subject, we think proper to subjoin it, as a short *specimen* of what we wish to see done hereafter in a larger form. The author, if we may judge by this performance (having no other knowledge of him than what we gather from hence) appears to be a person well qualified for such a work, and may be inclined on some future occasion to consider this subject further, in the same spirit of candor and impartiality.

* “SIR,

IT has been common either to cry down the *Disquisitions* in the gross, or in the same manner to side in with them. The following reflections are of a different stamp, and do neither the one nor the other ; and they are, I can assure you, the reflections of one, who is not in any degree led by favour to

* *London Magazine* for January, 1751.

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any side or party whatever, and who has nothing at heart but the good of all, and the prevailing of truth.

I lay it down for incontestable, that amendment, whenever real, is desirable; and shall freely grant, that wherever it is only pretended, and things would be made worse by any alteration, it is as contestably to be avoided. Now we have nothing to do but fairly to apply these two general maxims to particulars, to come at a just decision in all that has been proposed by the *Free and Candid Disquisitions*.

I hope it is not to be supposed that our governors cannot distinguish between these so very different cases, nor would I willingly suppose that they will not; and I am sure it would be very strange (to say no worse) not to be willing to have them do it. There can be no harm in his being fairly done; there may be much good—as much as there is room for real amendment. And one would hardly think that any one should wish to prevent that: Yet this appears plainly to be the case, where any are forward to take advantage of any ill-judged amendments being proposed, to the preventing of all. This is the disposition of numbers, and they are glad to see any thing bad proposed, for the sake of rejecting together with it, every thing that is good. “I thank God (says one of these to me the other day) the *Disquisitions* have by good luck over-done the thing, and so it will come to nothing.” But sure, all are not absurd enough to give into so gross a delusion. The good, sure, may be taken, tho’ the bad be rejected. He that opposes any thing because bad, is therein shewn to be a friend to truth and right: but he that opposes good and bad alike, and confounds them in one and the same treatment, is as evidently actuated by some other motive. He that can oppose any endeavours to perfect our *version of the bible*;—
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that can oppose the disentangling our *three services* (the morning-service, the litany, and the communion-service) which being designed as distinct ones, have great injustice done them, and are subjected to tautologies and many improprieties by being huddled into one in our reading them, which they separately are very far from being chargeable with ; when, too, it is not the reading them at separate times, but the reading them at once, as we now do, that is the innovation ;—he that can oppose the altering any *obsolete words* in the Liturgy, which by length of time, and change in our language, are become, to the unlearned, of no sense, or of a bad sense, such as *With my body I thee worship*, in matrimony ;—he that can oppose any change in the appointments of *lessons*, that might be more to edification, and will stickle for the retaining of those Apocryphal or Levitical lessons, which occasion, from different quarters, merriment, confusion of face, sneers and idle thoughts or jests, rather than appointing in their room such as would instruct people in their duty, and raise devout and religious sentiments ;—he that can oppose a supply of further *occasional offices and prayers*, when there are actually several important cases unprovided for ;—he that can oppose the change of such expressions in the *burial office*, as are (thro' the faults of the times) become liable to be sadly misapplied ;—he that can oppose the altering the *Church-wardens oath*, which, as things stand, is so sure not to be kept ;—he that can oppose the making any reform in our *ecclesiastical courts* ; and, to name no more, can oppose the change of such *articles*, as are not held in the sense of the compilers, by our Church, In these more enlightened times ; will have the less credit in opposing some other things, really bad, because in opposing these equally, he betrays upon what motive he acts.

I am far from thinking every thing right, which is proposed in the Disquisitions ; but must I therefore admit of nothing ? This is the ridiculous inference which many would have us make. There are, undoubtedly, several particulars in that work, that require canvassing (and in God's name, let every thing be brought, so it be with candor and temper, as strictly to the test of reason as may be ;) and there are some things, which, I think, it cannot be denied are of a very ill tendency * : but even these, the candor of our proposers requires should be opposed with candor ; and when any one takes this method of opposing them, he shews that his exceptions are not founded in prejudice : whereas, when men condemn things in the gross, or even make an advantage of what things are wrong, to get those which are right condemned, the one or the other of which has been the case of most of the writers against the Disquisitions, they shew that their opposition is not founded in reason. I am as much as any body can be for rejecting every thing, which shall, upon due deliberation and weighing its merits, be found wrong. But why should any thing be denied such attention, and right and wrong be blended in one common fate ? It is as bad to reject what is right, as to admit what is wrong ; and therefore I hope to find another temper amongst us, and particularly in our governors, than what prevailed at the last review in the friends of *Bel* and the *Dragon* ; and that they will allow every thing its due regard and weight ; however

* The authors beg leave to say, that they know of none, and for certain never intended any of that sort. When such things are specified, and the objections to them fairly proposed, they will take them under fresh consideration, and attend them as far as they can thro' all their consequences ; not solicitous about the issue, so long as truth is discovered, and every thing set to right that may happen to be wrong. The Church, it may be hoped, will one day be of this temper also.

averse they ought to be to all that is wrong, and cool to what they are not well satisfied is right, I hope they will be found as ready to comply with whatever is undoubtedly so. Let not all miscarry, because some wrong things are proposed. Can't they take the right, and reject the wrong? I would not have any thing that is wrong complied with for the sake of Dissenters, or men of any denomination whatever; but sure we should do what the wisest and best of our own Church have desired to see done, and what it would be right to do, tho' there were not one Dissenter, &c. in being. In short, if but one right thing was suggested, that ought to be regarded, and only what is wrong should be slighted. — But there are many things, which no unprejudiced person can deny, but they might be altered for the better. In God's name then let these be attended to: He is an enemy to our Church, who does not wish to see every thing that is really exceptionable, removed from it. Let a *beginning* be made with altering what is certainly *amiss*. There is no need to be hasty and rash in things not so undoubtedly right; but it is inexcusable not to be earnest and active in what *is* so.

Thus, for instance, it may be very right not to be hasty in giving up all *subscriptions*, because it has not yet been shewn not to be liable to ill consequences: But sure, there can be no room to demur, whether we ought to alter any *articles* that disagree with the present sentiments and teaching of all, and which are continually opposed from the pulpit; or whether we ought to keep them only to be an occasion of prevarication, and of being chargeable with insincerity. — If it be said, people are allowed to deviate from their original sense, and to put one more agreeable to the present teaching upon them: What occasion for such double-dealing? Were it
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not better to part with any such article, together with the sense intended for the compilers, than fraudulently to change their sense for another, with the delusive appearance of retaining their words? Were it not better to change it for another, that should carry in the very face of it, and in the plain, apparent sense of its words, the doctrine now preached and embraced? I know of no good that can come of the other practice. It may (nay, it certainly must) do harm: But surely it is not therefore desirable.—— The use of subscribing, according to *belief*, is to unite together those of the same sentiments. But what, I pray, is the use of subscribing *contrary to belief*? The countenancing such a thing is the way to defeat that end, and to teach people to evade the test they are put to. Nay, so much as the appearance ought to be avoided, on account of the discredit which it brings with it.—This one instance may suffice: And the aim of what has been said, is to inforce the rectifying of all that is evidently and undeniably amiss; to enter fairly into the merits of what is supposed amiss; and to discard undistinguishing prejudices, and the promoters of them, as they can serve no better end than to hinder improvement.

Assafotes."

N U M B. XV.

Feb. 7. 1750-1.

My worthy Friends and fellow-labourers;

IN one of the papers which have been lately laid before me for my perusal and consideration, and which I now return with some short remarks, notice is taken of the common methods of our adversaries, both in *opposing* our cause, and *neglecting* it. By the former, they endeavour to place it in a wrong light, and

and thereby to prejudice the multitude, and exasperate them against it. By the latter, they would willingly insinuate, and have it believed by the vulgar, that it is a contemptible cause, and not deserving any notice. How far this neglect on the one hand, or opposition on the other, may have the desired effect, in hindering the success of our labours, I am not at present able to say, and time will shew. But this I may venture to say with some assurance, that our open opposers have so far fallen short of their aim, as by their scurrility and abuse, and other intemperate measures, to have exposed their own weakness at least, if not also that of their cause. And as to those who seem to neglect or contemn what has been so fairly offered, and in the judgment of many, so fully proved, I make no scruple to say, what has been said by many more who are accurate observers of what they read, and of what passes in conversation; that if our cause could have been overthrown by argument, argument would have done its work long before this, and the attempt would have been defeated as soon as it appeared. But it continues still to stand its ground, and to gain more; and neither neglect nor opposition (it is believed by some, and feared by others) will be able to put a stop to the progress it is making. For men begin to consider this subject more attentively and more accurately, than they were wont to do; and the more they consider it, with serious freedom and impartiality, the more they will be convinced, that all is not right, and that there is at least some reason to plead for a reformation.

It is really pleasing to our friends, to observe how little our adversaries are able to do, either by their politic attacks, or by their more politic silence. Let them move which way they will, or not move at all, we hope, by the justness of our cause, and

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equity of our proceedings, to be even with them in the end: And the blessing of God, which we daily and earnestly beseech him to bestow upon our labours, will unquestionably prove an overmatch by degrees, to all schemes, open or secret, to bring them to be nought. Why do men *neglect* what they apprehend to be so *fatal*, if they do indeed apprehend it to be so? If it is not apprehended in that light, why is it *placed* in such a light; and why are such outcries made, as if all was at stake, and our Religion and Church were intended to be ruined? Let men be consistent with themselves, and agree in one uniform scheme of defeating us. Let them either speak, and speak to the purpose, without raillery, without bitterness; or else fairly confess to the world, that they know not what to say, and therefore for ever after be silent. One or the other of these two things will be expected of them; and since we go on with our design, and are (I hope) determined to do so, we call upon all our opponents, whether profest or disguised, to speak their minds, and either own that we are right, or, if they really think that we are otherwise, to produce their strong reasons, and overthrow ours. Such reasons, if they have them, they are welcome to produce, and we desire they should: If they have them not, it will remain no longer a secret why they chuse to suppress them. The public will readily draw the just *inference*, as well from premeditated *neglect*, as from a clamorous but weak *opposition*. Here then the adversaries are left to their choice; and we have no manner of diffidence in our cause, to fear their doing it hurt *either way*. They are now called upon: Let them look to the consequence, and answer for it.

I cannot conclude this letter without observing to you, with some pleasure, and yet with concern, that
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the invective and the silent schemes to prevent a reformation, are neither of them new. Both were used to hinder the removal of popery. And is it not a shame, for any members of a protestant Church, to use them still, in order to defeat just endeavours for a further reform that is so much wanted?

I happened lately to look into the famous (for my own part, I rather think it infamous) *Defence of Pluralities*. If any of you shall think fit to look into the same book, after the irrefragable answer given to it by a great and good man, whose reasonings will be approved and applauded by future ages, tho' they may be wisely neglected, because they cannot be solidly refuted, by the wisdom of the present generation; you will see the miserable contrivances of a learned but politic divine (of more than common parts) to palliate plain truth, to run down common sense, and defend a profitable error, upon the ruins of common honesty. Indeed his very manner of supporting his absurd cause convinces me more and more, that nothing truly rational can be said in its defence. If any man could have maintained it, upon the foot of truth and common reason, as well as upon the maxims of popish policy (which he has accurately investigated, and would obtrude upon us as fit for protestants to imitate) certainly this man, of all others, must have carried his point; and this among other remaining abuses, must have been judged to be at least as harmless, if not also as beneficial to society, as even the whole mass of popery is by some represented to be.

I will now lay before you some part of this gentleman's introduction, by which you will plainly discern, that those who have an enmity to truth, are put to the same shifts, and make use of the same methods to defeat it, in every age. This observation, instead of disheartening, will, I hope, en-

courage you. I will give you the very picture of the adversaries of your cause, drawn by a masterly hand, that you may see the lineaments are the same, and that these moderns proceed upon the same foot of policy, whether by invective or neglect, in hopes to prevent a more general reformation,—that their fore-runners did, in endeavouring to prevent the reformation of pluralities. You need only apply the words in a proper manner (which I leave to yourselves, and to other competent judges) and you will easily assent to the observations that are commonly made in your favour. Those of the contrary sort, you will presently see, do neither favour you, nor any others, whether of the Clergy or Laity, who abet your cause.

1. Why was there a *neglect* of answering the plain and common arguments against pluralities? You shall hear. To avoid giving the true reason, this neglect is artfully thrown upon the *Clergy*, and they alone are brought upon the stage, as if others had no concern.—“The Clergy, in the mean while, assured of the justice of their cause, and impertinence of these exclamations, [such as yours, I will suppose, may now be thought to be] have remained *silent*, expecting that this unreasonable accusation should *cease with time*, or at least make *no impression* upon those, whom the folly of Puritanism [or perhaps after all, of Christianity itself] hath not yet infected. But when many persons of our communion engage themselves in the same quarrel, and publicly defame the Church upon this account; it is not fit the injured *Clergy* should any longer continue their *silence*, lest it should be thought to imply a *Confession* of *guilt*, or give way to all those inconveniences, which a hasty and imprudent change in this matter might probably produce to the Church.”

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2. Why do our adversaries *oppose* our cause, and thereby oppose common reason and sense, or what most men, on impartial examination, would judge to be so? The defender answers, in the behalf of his own cause, and so do our opponents on the behalf of theirs: "I am not insensible, what a difficult province I have undertaken: [The very apology, as I remember, made by a late Remarksman levelling his aim at your treatise; who with this author, might very well apprehend the difficulty of a province, wherein a man was to oppose common sense:--] 'What opposition and censures will attend it. Many will esteem it a paradox; [which it certainly is;] 'and most will conclude it [and very justly too] 'a rash undertaking, to oppose reason to a popular cry [or rather, to oppose a popular cry to reason,] 'and to endeavour to defend, what almost all men by hearing only one side, have been long since induced to condemn. Many good men, really zealous and concerned for the honour of religion, will perhaps suppose it to be a scandal to apologize for what they have hitherto believed to be no less than evil. To these I doubt not to give intire satisfaction; if they will judge with candour and indifferency. Others, who are far the most violent adversaries, only zealous in pretence, affecting to gain the reputation of extraordinary piety; not really concerned for the honour of religion, but endeavouring to recommend themselves by the pretence of it [such is the candor of his sentiments, or, in plainer words, such is the dexterity of his artifice, to render his opponents odious:] 'will decry the author of this apology as an enemy to religion and purity, as an ungodly pluralist [a pluralist he was, tho' I do not say an ungodly one; unless this should be thought to give him a title to that epithet, *viz.* his having two livings, yet re-

sliding upon neither of them:] ‘ who prefers his interest to the honour of God and the good of others : nor will perhaps stop here the effects of their anger, if he be so unfortunate as to be discovered.” [What this Gentleman apprehended should be his fate, who was pleading in the behalf of a pleasing error, you may with much more reason apprehend will be yours, who are obtruding upon the world so much unpalatable truth. Which, according to the proverb, if you follow too close at the heels, it may happen in time to give you a dash in the forehead. But fear not the effects of their anger, who are so eager to oppose you. The God whom you serve, will skreen you from those effects. Never doubt of the protection of his providence. The very hairs of your head are all numbred.]

“ Indeed it is so easy, and withal so advantageous a subject, to expose the faults of others, and especially the supposed corruptions of a national Church ; that the inclinations of ambitious men to oppose this innocent [indeed a very innocent] ‘ practice of the Church, may easily be accounted for. It seems to unwary persons to be an evident argument of exalted sanctity, to oppugn the received discipline of any communion ; since this insinuates as if they were more religious and knowing than a whole nation. To such men nothing is more grievous than to be tied down to the ordinary rules of religion and government ; since to be religious in the common way, would never distinguish them from other men. Somewhat must be continually attempted by them, which may make the credulous part of mankind cry out, ‘ See a man more religious than all the Clergy, ‘ who went before, or are contemporary with him ! ‘ They all practised, or at least allowed, a scandalous custom. This man’s piety is extraordinary, ‘ and qualifyeth him beyond others to be a governor ‘ of

‘ of the Church.’ [This man’s piety is extraordinary, and qualifieth him beyond others to be a governor of the Church, who hath done such signal service to the Church, as to defend a practice so innocent, which some esteem to be so scandalous to her, and hath in so masterly a manner demonstrated it to be right. Must not this man be allowed to be more religious than all the Clergy, who went before, or are contemporary with him?] “ It is lamentable indeed to consider, that the credulity of mankind should be so easily wrought upon by designing men, and that impostors of this kind should seldom want success. [You see what titles you are to expect, if you continue in your design. And yet, is it not somewhat of a wonder that this author did not see how applicable these words were to himself, and how justly they might be turned upon him, considering the nature of his undertaking?] “ Such exclamations against the received order and discipline of the Church have, ever since the first foundation of it, been the common-place to all ambitious Clergymen desiring to appear zealous. [You, whether Clergymen, or Laymen, or both, cannot, I think, be charged with any such ambition; nor have your greatest adversaries as yet attempted to fasten that character upon you. As to your *zeal*, it is evident of what sort it is; not a zeal for worldly interests, but for the honour and increase of true religion.] “ Nothing is more easy, than to discover vices in another, or corruptions in a society. This is a subject, which will afford constant matter to public harangues, and can never be exhausted. At the same time nothing is more popular, in that it qualifieth [or gratifieth] the perverse nature of men, who generally love to hear things and persons of public esteem decried, and secureth to the pretended zealot the reputation of a more elevated piety, than that

which appears in any of those whom he opposeth: [Unhappy, if it appears in none of them.] ‘ With this artifice a man may not only create authority to himself, but cover his own faults, however gross and numerous, by diverting and fixing the eyes of men upon the faults of others; or if his own crimes be too notorious to be dissembled, compensating for them by a wonderful appearance of zeal; [which will never do in such a case, and will soon be discovered to be a false one; consequently will expose the wretch to just odium and contempt.] ‘ He that will vehemently exclaim against pluralities, and the other supposed imperfections of the Church, may safely neglect all the parts of his own duty, may be non-resident, [as I am, he might have interposed, who vehemently exclaim on the side of pluralities;] ‘ may sordidly enrich himself and his relations; may injure his equals, oppress his inferiours: And all this shall be easily forgiven in consideration of his zeal. If I would recommend myself to a lecture in the city, I could take no more successful method, than to inveigh against pluralities, or accuse the Clergy of negligence and covetousness. The name of a zealous reformer would set me beyond all competition of real worth and learning. If I desired to excuse any scandalous immoralities, which cannot be dissembled; [and which, belike must be *your* case, according to the candid judgment of this author] ‘ I would arraign all the corruptions of the Church, exclaim powerfully against her governors, and cry up the necessity of reformation. To so warm a zeal for public good, private sins would easily be permitted. Those who know the town, have seen examples of both kinds within this year. [Within this year, within these many years, within all your years, nothing of this sort, God be thanked, can be said of any of *you*, by those who know the town, or country either. You may

may safely defy all your adversaries, even tho' you should one and all of you give them your names at length, and appear in broad day before the world, as your honest cause hath done. God will prosper it, because it is his own ; and will preserve its friends, because they have had the integrity and courage, in an age of strong delusion, to maintain the cause of truth. Your names the present generation has nothing to do with ; and you are right in concealing them, for a while, from a malevolent and ungrateful world. Take care only, continue always to take care, that your names may be written in heaven, and tho' not recorded in your own book, may be recorded in the *Book of Life*. Your book, like all others, is subject to the common fate of mortality : But that book is immortal. There, and there only, get your names inrolled.] “ This air of popularity [very well still, in the same strain] hath been the great pest of the Church in all ages ; when Churchmen employ their designs not so much to preserve the honour of religion, as to acquire to themselves a *name* and *interest* among the multitude ; [your names unknown ; your interest undiscovered, only suspected to be too favourable to the honour of religion] “ when they apply themselves to obtain the favour of the professed enemies of the Church ; [which some would suppose *you* do, tho' you court the favour of neither enemies nor friends, but conceal your selves as much as possible from the knowledge of both, as seeking only that favour *which cometh from above*, and referring your cause ultimately to Him, who alone judgeth righteously :] “ and for that end stick not to betray her constitutions, and to be instruments in her disgrace. Doubtless in the ancient Church it would not have been thought any great recommendation of a Catholic Clergyman, to have sought the favour of the Donatists, to admit
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and second those heavy imputations, which they cast upon the Catholicks ; to call them brethren [as we now commonly, but too charitably, as it may seem, call dissenters ;] ‘ and treat the sincere members of the Church as enemies. [Those, in fact, are its enemies, however sincere in their meaning, who oppose its reformation. Those, as you have somewhere rightly observed, are its best friends, who desire and endeavour that it may be reformed, and brought nearer to the model and design of the Gospel] “ How can it ever be expected, that the Laity should conscientiously obey the constitutions of the Church, and retain their duty to her ; when the Clergy make light of her authority, vilifie her constitution, court the friendship of those who have divided themselves from her communion, and seek their ruin ? When for their sake they will slight her sacred offices, mutilate or disuse her ceremonies, prostitute her honour, and betray her cause ? ”

After this popular and invidious harangue, the author enters upon his doughty undertaking, with great assurance of success, where he shall happen to find readers of his own mind and taste. How well he hath succeeded with men of more impartial examination, may perhaps by this time be not very difficult to conjecture. And whether his reasonings are solid, in support of the point he would prove, may best be judged, by *comparing* his treatise with that which asserts his cause to be *indefensible*.

Parrhesianus.

N U M B. XVI.

SIR,

IT is pleasant to observe the common knack of our writers, in defending our Common-prayer. They know that things are wrong in it, but durst not own it. They would fain defend it, if they could ;

could ; but know not how. They are so wary, and so wily, that they will not speak their minds ; and when they attempt the work, they do it so gingerly and so awkwardly, that you would be surprized, if you did not too well know their manner. I speak not here of those, who go plumb to their work, and are resolved, at all adventures, to defend our Liturgy, right or wrong : Nor of those who speak something like reason in its behalf, and seem, themselves, to be convinced that it is a good thing, and are therefore willing to persuade others by reasoning, that it is so. I myself allow it to be a good thing, and a very good thing, considering the substance of it, and the time in which it was composed. I therefore join in it myself, as such, and heartily approve of it, considered in this view. But I can have no great patience, I own, with such writers, great or small, as are for mincing the matter, and are only deluding [us with something, and in the end with nothing. Many such I have met with in my time ; and the number of them seems to be increasing, since the institution of *Hutchin's* lecture. They have all spoken with the utmost caution, excepting one ; who could not be prevailed upon, or perhaps was never requested, to publish his sermon. For the rest, I shall give you only one instance, tho' you may be acquainted with it already ; but I do not find it in your book. Dr. *Watson*, late of *Walkbrook*, published a sermon he had preached at that anniversary lecture. You shall hear how he speaks upon the whole, after he had defended the Liturgy in the best manner he could, and had given, indeed, satisfactory reasons for the use of a public form. " I will not here take upon me to say, as much as I esteem our Liturgy, that there is nothing in it that can possibly be altered for the better ; [*which by the way is not the question ;*] for this is more than can be said of any human composition, and the compilers
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of it themselves, have declared it alterable, upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigences of times and occasions, and as shall seem most expedient to them that are in authority."——But then he has his salvo's, and they are, in short, good for nothing. The case is the same with most other writers of late. They will own it possible that our Liturgy may be amended; but will go no farther, not one step you may be sure. They will be cautious of this; and this, amongst other reasons, prevents its being reformed. Were a lecture set up, with a pretty good emolument (I speak my mind freely and plainly) to encourage an *examination* of our Liturgy, and to point out, with a proper decency and freedom, those parts or passages wherein it is conceived to be justly blameable, and not so well adapted to the great intent of public-worship; it is reasonable to believe, that things would appear in a different light from what they now do; and that those, who are now mincing, would then speak freely, and press earnestly for a review of what they seem at present only to suppose, or suspect may deserve it. This I leave you to consider of, and those who understand the present regulations better than I do. In the meantime, I cannot but think it was somewhat imprudently done in the well-meaning Mr. *Hutchin*, to found such a lecture as that above-mentioned. What end can it serve, besides keeping up contention amongst fellow-protestants? which it was one view of the illustrious *Boyle*, by *his* lecture, to prevent. Mr. *Hutchin* seems not to have sufficiently considered the nature of human institutions, nor the design of our reformers, and the liberty as well as room which they left for farther improvements. However, I have not seen the words of his will, and may therefore be mistaken in this point.

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After all, I am of opinion that Mr. *Hutchin's* lecture will have very little effect upon any of the more considerate members of our Church, who shall think fit to look into the *Candid Disquisitions* offered for the reformation of it. To maintain all the defects (for I would not use a harder word) of the present Liturgy, will be only exposing the judgment of those who abet them, and will in the mean time be doing the Liturgy no service. The *Short History of the Common prayer*, which you so justly approve, will second the design of the *Disquisitions*, and be a means to give ordinary people a notion of the reasonableness of that design. Nor will a lecture within the bills of mortality be able to obstruct the progress of an influence that is spreading far beyond them. A clamorous Gentleman in the town, and a more sedate one in the country, may as well be silent. Their voices are not attended to in either; nor will be, so long as *Reason*, on the other side, shall be permitted to utter her gentle voice, and that voice shall be heard by those who prefer it to din and jangling. I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that the *Short History* (as I am assured by a friend that knows) is going to the press a second time, and will be published soon with some *additions*. I am, &c.

Feb. 13. 1751. *Eleutherius.*

N U M B. XVII.

S I R, Nov. 14. 1750.

THE authors of the *Candid Disquisitions* having waited a great while to see whether any thing rational and solid could be objected to their design, find reason to complain, that instead of fair argument, they meet with little else from their opponents, than unfair usage. A shrewd sign, they think, that the opposite cause labours under too many

many difficulties to be cleared to satisfaction ; and that those who abet it, conscious of this, yet unwilling to give it up, are forced to have recourse to the low methods of invective, hoping thereby to prejudice, where they cannot convince their readers.

To set this matter in a just light, let us look back a little, and survey the different proceedings on each side of the question.

The authors above-mentioned, having long observed with concern the want of a Review, and the many intimations that had from time to time (tho' without effect) been given to this purpose by many of the worthiest members of the Church ; judged it proper to try, whether it might not be of some service, to make a fresh application ; proceeding in a manner somewhat different from what had heretofore been used, and supporting their application with the united judgment of those great and good men, who had on former occasions delivered their remonstrances, and whose authority, they hoped, would have its just weight with men of reason, and such as would fairly consider the several arguments that had been offered, when many should be placed together in one view. But not content with the authorities alone (tho' they know this to be an argument of the greatest force with many, and in the present case really just in itself) they thought it became them to be more explicit, to lay open the whole affair, to shew what it really was, to examine and canvass it upon the foot of reason, to consider and remove objections, and, having done all that they judge necessary for their purpose, to submit the whole of their application to the sober reason of mankind ; addressing it more immediately to their governors, to whom they thought themselves in duty bound to present it : Which they did at first in a more private manner. This appeal to men's
reason

reason in the behalf of a Review was made by these authors, with all the deference, with all the decency, and with all the inoffensiveness, they could possibly contrive : And with a benevolence of heart, which gives them the utmost complacency on recollection, as knowing it to be founded on true Christian principles, and the effects of it calculated to do the truest and the greatest service to the Church of *England*. This was the aim, this hath been the conduct of these writers.

Let us next see how they have been treated for their good-will to the public, and to the Church of God. Just as they expected, and easily foresaw they should be. With virulence and spleen ; With rancour and ill-nature : With an enmity not becoming Christians and good men, nor serviceable to a good cause : With indecent railing, with unworthy insinuations, with ill-applied motto's, with unjust reproaches, with heat and passion, with contempt and scorn, with ridicule and raillery, with insufficient arguments,—and last of all, even with dreams and visions of the night. All these a shame to any cause, and to the authors ; not fit to be owned, much less to be defended, by any serious and judicious writers. It is but too manifest, that there is very little seriousness, as there is very little solidity, in such kind of opposition. The adversaries may make the best they can of it. They will be disappointed. The *Disquisitions* will gain ground the more, the more they are opposed in this impotent manner. For why ? Will not the common reason of mankind expect argument against argument ? Is railing an answer to reasoning ? Will men be convinced by wit, when an important cause is in question, and when they want only to know, whether the *Disquisitions* can be answered upon the foot of reason ? Will they be content with subterfuges, and with evading the question ? With palliating the main point in debate ?
And

And with barely reflecting upon authors, who have laid their cause freely before the world, and have fairly submitted it to the consideration of common reason and honesty? Let common reason, and common honesty, again be judges. To these the authors again appeal. By these (as they have upon another occasion professed) they will be finally determined. And can the world expect more at their hands?

Let us bring the point once more under view, and make one short observation upon it. Those who had any thing to urge against the proposals in the *Disquisitions*, have been over and over invited to a fair inquiry. They have been assured farther, that none but just reasoning, conducted with candor, would be attended to. This seemed to be sufficient on the part of the authors of the *Disquisitions*. Here they rested their cause, expecting fair answers, if any, from fair men. This favour hath been denied them. Their civil invitation hath been declined. Clean contrary measures have been taken. What shall we now say? Is the opposite cause defensible, or is it not? If it is, let it be defended, upon the terms proposed. If it is not, let it be fairly acknowledged that it is not defensible, and let it therefore remain in silence, as incapable of just defence. This would be acting openly and ingenuously with the world; and the world would then know what judgment to pass. In the mean time, according to the present measures, this great subject is only perplexed, and thereby detained the longer from a final and fair decision.

In short, had the treatise intitled *Free and Candid Disquisitions*, stood upon no just foundation; had its pleas been unreasonable, and grounded upon no sufficient authorities, we should have seen it answered and refuted long before this, by men of proper abilities, with much better temper, and with the con-

nivance

nivance at least, if not also the encouragement of superiors. But nothing of this sort hath as yet been done, or seems likely to be done soon. Judge where the impediment lies: *i. e.* Judge whether this book is fairly answerable or not. The *silence* of men of abilities, upon so important a subject, creates a suspicion in the world, which is not favourable to the other cause, and cannot easily be got over, till the ground of it is removed. The world will expect a *solid* answer, or will continue to draw the inference, which it has hitherto done.

An inference hath indeed been drawn, not very favorable to the Disquisitions themselves; *viz.* that the two great men, authorizing a late advertisement, set forth in the public papers, did by that advertisement intend to signify their disapprobation of any proposals for a reform, and particularly of those exhibited in the Disquisitions. This inference hath by many been believed to be just, tho' by the more sensible few doubted, and doubted for good reasons. An advertisement, which soon followed, signed by the bookseller who printed the Disquisitions, shewed, that the authors of that treatise laid no stress upon great names, but upon the real merit of their cause; upon the sole foundation of which they rested the issue of it, leaving it with the impartial reason of men, as supposing them both willing and capable to judge for themselves, upon the foot of that reason. Those authors, at the same time, took that opportunity to assure the public, by the friend they employed, that they had been no way accessory towards either raising or spreading the report, that had prevailed, concerning such extraordinary persons having been engaged in that work. This hath given satisfaction to numbers; who believed, and always will believe, the authors to be honest. But the inference above mentioned, let it

be here observed, is not just, nor is it grounded upon fact. Time may perhaps shew that the thing is otherwise; and the real reasons of ordering the advertisement to be published may appear at a convenient season."——

[Thus far, upon a sort of constraint, in one of the public miscellanies.]

A proper interval having elapsed since the foregoing paper was published, and reasonable expectations of some farther account of this matter having been raised by it; that account shall now be communicated: Which is this. The two most worthy Gentlemen, to whom the Christian world is so much obliged for their incomparable performances upon the *Resurrection of Christ*, and the *Conversion of St. Paul*, being the last summer at *Tunbridge*, and the one complaining to the other, that he was pestered with letters, upon the subject of the scheme proposed in the *Free and candid Disquisitions*, as being one of the supposed authors of that treatise, and both of them having been frequently abused in magazines and other papers, by such who disapproved of the scheme therein proposed, as well as commended by others, who were for carrying it into execution; to put at end at once as well to flattery as censure (since they knew they had merited neither upon this occasion) they agreed to publish the advertisement before mentioned, without giving, or intending to give, any intimation, which should afford countenance of any sort, to the ill-drawn inference above referred to; an inference (as is rightly added) for which there is as small a foundation, as there was for the report, that they were the authors of the treatise, that is injured by it; or for the suspicion (which they themselves never entertained, and few, if any, men of judgment did) that the said report was either set on foot, or set forward, by those authors.

thors. Nor did they therefore chuse, or judge it necessary, to take any notice of those, who whether by letters, or advertisements, took the liberty to solicit them afterwards, to give their sanction to so unjust an inference, as that which had been charged upon them.—This account may be depended upon as authentic. And since it comes from such honourable hands, worthy of all credit as well as esteem, and comes freely and unrequested, we submit it to the public now to judge, whether we have been fairly used by our adversaries; who have endeavoured to make the world believe, that those Gentlemen are as much adversaries to our cause, as they themselves are, and could wish them and others to be. For ourselves, we presume not to draw the least inference in our favor, with respect to the sentiments of those excellent men; tho' we may at least (some or other of us) have as much reason to be acquainted with their sentiments on this head, as our opponents have.

To clear our integrity still further, if there may be but the least occasion now remaining; we think it not improper to subjoin, what we here confirm and justify, the attestation of one of our friends in a paper of last *March*, signed *Philander*: Whose words in answer to the misrepresentations of an unfair objector, are these.—‘ He next surmises, that the authors
 ‘ of the *Disquisitions* have contrived to countenance
 ‘ their proposals with the authority of some *great*
 ‘ *names*. This (says he) I am sure of, that they
 ‘ have contrived to countenance them with no other
 ‘ names, than those they have actually produced in
 ‘ their treatise:’ [He means the *citations* out of the
 writers of our Church:] ‘ Nor do they, I am equally
 ‘ sure, desire any other authority to favour them
 ‘ in their design, but that of truth and fact:’ [He
 might have added also, that of our Governors;]
 ‘ to the decision of which they have all along sub-

mitted their proposals. If the public has been
 surmising, and even specifying, and mistaking
 upon the subject, they cannot help it. For they
 have been no way necessary to any thing of this
 kind; and I am well assured, that it had been
 agreed amongst them from the beginning, that
 no names should be mentioned.

These things being truly represented, we may
 now subscribe, as upon the former occasion,

Irenici.

Feb. 14. 1750-1.

N U M B. XVIII.

*Quid enim ab officio hominis Christiani, sacerdotis &
 theologi, alienius esse potest, quàm in eo, quo se profitetur
 religionem defendere, tantum acerbitalis effundere, &
 contra quàm lex mutui amoris sancit, multos bonos vi-
 ros de se nihil tale merentes tam insigni injuriâ afficere?*
 Julii Pflug. epist. ad Erasum. 1533.

To the Author of several Letters to a Dignitary
 of the Church of *Wells*.

REVEREND SIR,

OCT. 1. 1750.

INSTEAD of troubling you or the world with
 any answer to your performance, which is thought
 to deserve none from the authors you oppose, it is
 judged sufficient for *them* to offer to you the follow-
 ing observations, leaving you to consider of them at
 your leisure.

1. That whereas the only notice they have taken
 of you hitherto in public, is at the close of their
Appeal to Reason and Candor, they hope they have
 uttered nothing there, that you can justly think to be
 inconsistent with good manners, and with the re-
 verence due to your sacred character. And whereas the
 the

the only notice which they purpose to take of you farther in public, is in the present paper; it will, they think, concern your character and your cause not a little, that you give no worse treatment to them, than they have or shall give to you; whose pardon they desire beforehand, if they shall happen to say any thing that may be less pleasing, in what they are going now to lay before you.

That all severe and uncharitable censures which may inadvertently have passed through your pen, and which you would perhaps retract on more calm reflection, are overlookt and forgiven you; since you are a man like ourselves, who are subject to the same infirmities with the rest of our fellow-creatures.—That your multiplied compliments of *learning* and other excellences, which meet us at every turn in your pages, are sufficiently understood in your own meaning, and are therefore declined with the same civility with which they are bestowed * —That all remarks which are not to the point in hand, and have

* “This Gentleman, says an observing friend, appears to me to have an *intention* of insulting and provoking; tho’ both, I think, without cause; the authors whom he has undertaken to chastise, having given him neither reason nor example to proceed in this manner. I verily believe the Gentleman would not like to be *himself* treated, in the same manner that *he* has treated *them*.—Surely he has overlooked, or else wilfully disregarded, the frequent memento’s they had suggested, in favour of fair debate, and a more dispassionate manner than the common one, of managing a controversy upon religious subjects. I doubt the observation which they have made upon him is too true; that out of too warm a zeal for his cause, and too great an indulgence to a *spirit of opposition* (the common foible, I observe, of controversial writers) he has less regarded the gentler *spirit of the Gospel*, and seems even to have forgotten it. To which I shall take leave to add, that in my opinion he has also acted too inconsistently with his character as a *Presbyter of the Church of England*: Whose honour he ought to have maintained, as much by excellence of temper, as by superiority of argument, supposing him to have the advantage of it on his side. Otherwise,

have no immediate tendency to clear the truth, pass for nothing, and are no way regarded.—That hitherto (as we are inclined to think) you have done no credit to yourself, nor service to your cause, by the remarks which you have offered. That you have cleared no one difficulty to the satisfaction that was wanted, and in the manner that was expected from you: That instead of clearing, you have perplexed your subject, and (what we are sorry to say) have manifestly prevaricated in more instances than a few; and this, as far as appears, with a design to keep truth out of sight; a conduct which has been blamed in you by some of your very friends.—That you have all the way mistaken your premisses; and consequently that your arguments are inconclusive.—That if you had convinced us of our errors, or of the unrighteousness of our cause, in any single point, we should readily have acknow-

in my opinion, it might have been much wiser for him to have *left off contention before ever he had meddled with it.*"

It may not be amiss in this place to take notice of one thing which has been thought by many to be somewhat unhandsome in your remarks. It is your treatment of a *brother Clergyman* of great esteem, whom you have thought fit, perhaps at an unguarded moment, to call a *sneering trifler*. That Gentleman, however capable of over-matching you in clean, tho' cutting satyr, and also, we suppose, of demolishing all your remarks (whom therefore by the way, it may not be adviseable for you to make too free with) hath so far restrained himself upon this uncivil usage, as in conversation to utter several very civil things of you, and in his letters to intimate, that he has neither intention nor inclination to be *severe upon a good man*. It might probably be of use to you to know all he hath said; nor hath he laid us under any restraint. We shall however only give you these few lines, as they may suggest to you some useful reflections.—'I pass over his unkind reflection upon my character, as giving me no pain, and forbear returning him any other answer than this:

*Quanto magis te istiusmodi esse intellego,
Tanto, Antigona, magis me par est tibi consulere & parcere.
Cur vetera tam ex alto appetissis diffidia?*

ledged

ledged it, and returned you our thanks; which for the present we reserve, till we shall have attained conviction.—That it may reasonably be expected, that you should shew the same ingenuity on your part; and that neither your having *written what you have written*, nor your being a presbyter of the Church, should make you ashamed to make acknowledgment where you shall find yourself to be in an error. St. *Jerom's* advice may not be below your notice, tho' one from *us* should happen to be so: *Non erubescas mutare sententiam: non enim es tantæ authoritatis* (speaking to a presbyter) *ut errasse te pudeat* *. And pray observe, for your encouragement, that there is no surer evidence of *true judgment*, as well of as humility and integrity, than a free and ingenuous confession that we have been mistaken.

That all you have hitherto offered against a reformation in our Church, will serve to as good purpose against any reformation whatsoever in any Church; your arguments plainly proceeding upon the same foundation.—That in allowing nothing to be wrong, and asserting all to be right in our establishment, you not only oppose a great current of authorities (many of them deserving high regard) but take the ready way to defeat your own ends. For men are not willing to give their assent, when they see things asserted which they know to be contrary to plain reason and fact, and to the repeated acknowledgments of many worthy and judicious persons, of whose judgment and impartiality they have the highest opinion.—That your calculation of the vast majority on your side (some millions, as we remember, you are pleased to say) happens to be wrong. You will not find it so, if you converse more with the world, than you appear to have done.—That according to your way of arguing, it

* Apol. ad Ruffin. Presbyt. Aquil.

might reasonably be requested of our Governors, that our public service instead of being made shorter, might be made longer than it is; and the Lord's prayer more frequently repeated. *If this excellent prayer, you say, was repeted twice as many times in a day [that is, as it may happen, upwards of thirty times,] I own, I could see no harm or impropriety in it.—Let not the best of prayers be laid aside.* Do the learned authors you mention ever desire this?—That if you had been as calm and dispassionate in treating our observations on the Common-prayer, as you have been in treating those concerning a new translation of the Bible, the world would have thought you more judicious, and less partial; but that having taken a different method, you are thought to have a greater veneration for the Liturgy than for the Scriptures.

That your intended dissertation upon the *beauties of good writing* may very well be postponed, till you shall have attained a greater degree of that candor and ingenuity, which the authors of the *Disquisitions* have asserted to be some of the most distinguishing excellences in such writing.—That your disparagement of their learning, knowledge of antiquity, &c. will be of very little service to you, unless you can shew, that their deficiency in these will spoil their cause; and that your own greater attainments in them, will justify yours. These authors do not envy you any superior attainments which you may have, but are really glad that you have them, wishing you the continuance and increase of them. *Your* cause may stand in need of such great abilities to maintain it. *Theirs* wants no more than an honest heart, and a good plain understanding; which will be sufficient to answer their purpose, in applying to common sense and candor.—That it is somewhat too hasty in you to pronounce

those

those to be *fools* and *madmen*, who for ought you have yet seen, or the kingdom can see, have hitherto *spoken the words of truth and soberness*, and shew at least that they enjoy the benefit of common sense; which many that are more learned, often seem to want.—That your reminding us of the severity of our canon-laws, and of the punishment due to us from the execution of those laws, is a monition a little out of time *, under our present equitable government; and convinces us less of the benevolence, than it does of the uncharitableness of our monitor.—That tho' your motto's, as applied by you, are extremely severe upon us, we can furnish you with twenty more out of the book of psalms which will answer your purpose still more effectually, being placed in the title-page of your ensuing Remarks. But out of reverence for that sacred book, which you have so unhappily forced into your service, in a cause which had no title to it, we forbear giving you any farther intimation †, and could wish you to

* ' *Learning* has a lovely child, called *Moderation*, and *Moderation* is not afraid or ashamed to shew her face in the theological world. The number of her *Friends* is increased, and, whilst our *civil Constitution* subsists, they are in *no danger*,' &c. Preface to some late *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*.

† Yet, as the Friend before-cited remarks here, ' Since the Gentleman, if I guess aright from his principles, may have a fondness for our old *metre version*, and be for defending and retaining the use of it in the Church, amongst other like things which may be to his taste, but which, for my own part, and for the sake of religion, I wish the Church were well rid of; I should think you can give no just offence by laying before him a few Stanza's, whether he shall chuse to make use of them or no; but still putting in your caveat, and entering your protest, against their being the genuine psalms of Scripture; to which they are in many instances a disparagement. May not some of the -
lowing rhymes be to the Gentleman's purpose, to chastise You with?'

to be more judicious in your choice, and more candid in your application, of future motto's——That whereas you make concessions (as you do sometimes) in favour of our *design*, saying you *shall always hope and believe the best of it*, &c. it is wished you may keep more uniformly to your declaration, in your future remarks, than you have done in those you have hitherto offered ; unless indeed you speak without meaning, and do neither hope nor believe as you say you do.

That when you are pleased to say (as you somewhere do) that you are 'not certain the learned Disquisitors will be satisfied with your reasons on some heads ; you may be very certain that they will not, nor can, so long as your reasons are no better, than they find them to be in that treatise.——That since you have not sufficiently cleared any one of your points, you may possibly have the mortification hereafter (at a proper time) to be *called back*, to clear

Why dost withdraw thine hand aback,
And hide it in thy lappe ?
O plucke it out, and be not slacke
To give thy foes a rappe.
The Hagarens and Moabites
With divers other mo——
Lord bring them all I thee bespre
To such rebuke and shame, &c.
And let them evermore daily
To shame and sleaundler fall :
And in rebuke and obloquy
To perish eke withal.——
How long shall they with bragges burst out,
And proudly prat their fill ?
Shall they reioice tha: he so stout,
Whose workes are ever ill ?

If it shall be said, the translation is much better in our modern books ; I answer, It is in many places much worse than it was at first : And ask, By what authority was it altered ? Very unwarrantable liberties have been taken with it. So that very often we have neither *David*, nor *Sternhold*, nor *Wisdome*, speaking their own sence. If unjust liberty is taken to make things worse, why is not just liberty taken to make things better ?

and

and to prove every one of them in a more satisfactory manner. For which arduous task, having this timely notice, you may think fit to prepare yourself as well as you can, and, if there shall be occasion, to call in the assistance of your friends; some of whom, as we are told, lament the disparity of your answer, and wish you had shewn yourself more equal to the undertaking.—That since by the judicious management of your first attempt, you have too unhappily discovered your inability to defend the cause you have undertaken, and to overthrow that which you oppose; there is too great reason to surmise, that this will in some measure damp the warm hopes of your zealous friends; who (like your impatient and impetuous fellow-presbyter of *Bexley* *) had expressed such high confidence of your abilities to refute us, and thought that our cause would soon be ruined by your remarks, and those of others who should join with you. Nevertheless, *having obtained help of God, we continue unto this day witnessing the truth both to small and great. Neither can any of you prove those things whereof you accuse us.*—That your insufficient endeavours to maintain your cause, have proved a means to confirm us in the justness of our own, and to corroborate our resolutions of going on to support it, till a more able adversary than you shew yourself to be, shall convince us that we are wrong.—That no adversary will be able to convince us, who shall write in the same strain that you do, and shall not appear to have more judgment, and less passion.—That notwithstanding all these discouragements, you are desired not to despond,

* *Letter in defence of our present Liturgy* [and, he might have added, *of many more things*] printed by Cooper, and signed BEXLEYENSIS.—“Are we [Presbyters, and other Ministers of the Church of England] gentle to all men, quiet, patient, meek, long-suffering?” *Visitation-sermon at Sevenoaks* (by the Minister of Bexley) 1742. p. 32.

much

much less to desist, but to go on with your enterprise, and to finish what you have begun; yet doing it, if you please and can, with a calmer temper, and with more cogent reasons.—That upon a review of these and the like discouragements, those who are well-wishers to our cause, and no enemies to yours, are afraid you will *desist*: But we earnestly intreat you, for the sake of truth, which we would fain see as well as you, to *go on*. Try to rescue it from injurious hands, if you think ours to be such. Shew it fairly and lovingly to men, and do not perplex and torture it, as you have done. We have really, if you will believe us (and we cannot help it, if you will disbelieve us; we have, sincerely) no other interest in view, but that of truth. Truth is found by discussion, but a fair and an equitable one. To this we again invite you.

That if you shall think fit to proceed in your remarks (to which, you see, we freely solicit you) it may be adviseable for you to be more upon your guard, and to consult more with men of judgment and candor; submitting to their censures, and moderating your own.—That you will disparage yourself, and disserve your cause, by consorting only with one set of men, and confining yourself to your own view of things; a view by much too narrow, and too unlikely to do service to the cause of truth.—That since you seem to labour under so many prejudices, which evermore have an unhappy effect upon the mind in the management of a debate; it is earnestly wished that you would take a review of them, and bring them under a fresh scrutiny; praying to God, if he sees that you are in any error, that he would shew it you, and both dispose and enable you to rectify it; or if you are right, that you may be able to convince others where they are wrong.—That in the further pursuit of your subject, it may be

be justly expected of you, to take notice of the *second* as well as of the first edition of the Disquisitions; and that it was scarce fair in you to overlook that edition, when you were writing your letters, since it was published almost as soon as you began, and long before you printed. You had, no doubt, your *reasons* for this omission. But the world will look upon your answer as imperfect, if you will content yourself with this imperfect manner of examining.— That in order to acquit yourself with honour, and do justice to the subject (which surely ought to be handled with great impartiality) we wish you would be pleased in your next remarks, if you intend any more, to pay a proper regard to those well-weighed words of a most learned Presbyter of our Church, which we shall here submit to your consideration, and would beg leave to recommend for your direction: *If any (says this worthy Doctor, after having honestly pleaded the cause of truth) will take upon him to confute me, the laws of Christian conference bind him (and I heartily intreat it at his hands) 1. to do it temperately, abstaining from railing and reproaching. 2. Perspicuously, that I may certainly know his meaning. 3. Honestly, that what I say be faithfully set down, and what I prove my sayings by, be not disguised, or (according to an usual trade taken up of late among cavillers) traduced with taunts and outcries, as if it were falsely alleged, until it appear to be so indeed. 4. I desire he will take my book wholly afore him, and so answer it as it lies, without omitting any thing: For to cull out some points from the rest, and to answer them only, is to confess that he cannot answer the whole as it lies in its own dependance.*

If these and other reasonable proposals shall be disregarded by you, and you will chuse still to go on after your former manner (so much resembling some of the methods here condemned by this doctor;) we must

must take the liberty to tell you beforehand, that we shall then suspect more than ever, that you are really unequal to the attempt you have engaged in, and that it was not without reason that the *Monthly Reviewers* of books that are published, taking notice of yours, delivered their sentiments as follows :—“ *The greatest part of what this Author says, is taken up in vindicating the length of the public service, and the frequent repetition in the Lord’s prayer in the Liturgy : Which [vindication] whoever gives himself the trouble to peruse, will, we are persuaded, be fully convinced of the truth of the author’s own declaration at his first setting out, viz. his being unable to remark properly upon a performance which appears to be the result of long and diligent inquiry.*”

“ What has been here suggested [we take the liberty to accommodate the words of a late valuable writer,] was with a view to moderate a prejudice which lies deep in the heart of an *Englishman* and a *Churchman*, that as his own vales, hills, rivers, and cities surpass in beauty and convenience any thing that the world affords ; so his own religious constitution is free even from all appearance of defect, and shadow of imperfection.—But a little more candor, and a little less partiality, would do us no harm.”

To the PUBLIC.

THE Gentleman, to whom the foregoing observations are addressed, having, as we are well informed, committed to the press more of his *Remarks*, written with even greater acrimony than the former, we shall submit it to the good-natured and disinterested part of the world to judge, how far such a manner of writing will do credit either to himself or his cause. We are extremely sorry, for his sake more than our own, that he still chuses to pursue his opposition to us with so great a want of temper and candor *. If he can forgive himself the wrong done us, We can, and do; sincerely praying that GOD also would forgive him. If, notwithstanding

* When a writer will deviate from his proper subject, to reflect upon *persons* and *characters* (which ought to be a tender point, and never meddled with in dispute) it is a sure sign of something either very mean in the accuser, or very bad in the cause. How the author of the *Remarks* will be able to acquit himself on this head, to the satisfaction of the public, must be left to himself to consider. We have given him neither provocation nor example of this kind, nor intend to give him any; judging it better to bear than retaliate, and leaving him to reflect upon the offensiveness of his conduct. Incivility is bad: Calumny is worse:

Quod VERUM atque DECENS, curo, & rogo, & omnis in hoc sum:

This being a character claimed by a *heathen* poet, may justly draw a blush from a *Christian Priest*, if he shall happen to find his own to be of a different stamp. May he learn from the example of One that was divine! And may the *meekness* of that *wisdom which is from above*, correct the malignant qualities of that which is from beneath! But if he continue to have bitter *envying and strife in his heart* (the disposition—not of a *wise man* and *endued with knowledge amongst Christians*) let him remember whose character it is, to *glory and lie against the truth*; remembering also, that *this wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish*: A sort of wisdom, surely, ill becoming a servant of God, and a *Presbyter of the Church of England*.

standing this, he shall think fit to proceed further in the same way of writing and arguing (tho' we hope he may be capable of doing both in a better manner) all we shall say is, That he will probably have few Readers, and will certainly have no Opposers amongst the authors of the *Free and candid Disquisitions*.

May 10. 1751.

N. B. *If in any of the foregoing papers, it shall be thought by men of judgment and candor, that there is rather too much severity, or more than may be proper in such a work as this; we shall submit to their judgment, without attempting to justify what such men shall condemn. Only it may be some alleviation of our fault (if such a fault shall be found) that we had not the command of every one's pen, who was so friendly as to favour us with his observations; nor could decently refuse admitting, what was so civilly offered with a view to serve us; tho' we have in many places taken the liberty that was allowed us, to vary and soften some expressions, where we apprehended them to be somewhat too harsh; and have endeavoured to render the whole as inoffensive as we well could; regarding at the same time our obligations to our friends, and the justice we owed to ourselves, and to the cause we are maintaining. All that we shall add further is this: It is more difficult than most men may be aware, to bear iniquitous treatment (which we may be too apt to fancy hath been our hard lot) with all the calmness and sedateness that become Christians, and men of reason. We heartily wish we could, upon every occasion of affront, suppress every the least emotion of resentment, which is ever too officious to intrude, and intermix with the human passions; being fully persuaded, upon the most repeated and most mature reflection, that the Christian temper is of all others the most amiable and most excellent, and will in the end do the most good, both to human society in general, and to every individual bearing the Christian name in this world, and aiming at the happiness of heaven in the next. — We shall conclude this work with a short but valuable collect of our Church, which we earnestly desire may have its proper influence, both upon ourselves and others.*

O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; send thy holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee. Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

F I N I S



ERRATA to be rectified in the
former volume of *APPEAL to Com-
mon Reason, &c.*

P *Ref.* Pag. 1. lin. 4. read, They were *most of them* intended.—
P. 50. l. 1. r. You have *your* reasons—P. 78. paragr. 2.
l. 12. r. *Litany*, instead of *Liturgy*.—P. 92. par. 2. l. ult. r.
state *in* eternity.—P. 102. l. 16 r. person *in* it. And the same
again in l. 22.—P. 103. par. 2. l. penult. r. *Ministers*. Ibid.
note, l. 5. r. thousands *of*.—P. 105. par. 2. l. 4, 5. r. *tendred*
[instead of *rendred*.]—P. 115. par. 2. l. 4. from the bottom, r.
what is *fit* to be supplied—P. 116. par. 2. l. 14. r. shall *be*
enjoined.—P. 150. l. ult. dele *making*.

In the *second impression* of the *Candid Disquisitions*, are the
two following errors of the press, besides those taken notice of at
the end of the former volume of *Appeal*.

Pref. p. x. l. 6. r. *these* matters.—*Disq.* p. 173. l. 20. in-
stead of *meerly* (which quite alters the sense) r. *meethy* subordi-
nate.

Note. The *second volume* of *Disquisitions*, more than *once*
promised in this *Appeal*, is sincerely intended to be made public.
Liberty continuing, it will appear in due time; and, in it, all
that the authors intend to offer further upon this important
subject.

Advertisement.

THE authors of the *Free and candid Disquisitions*, apprehensive of a fresh accession of censures, upon a fresh occasion now supposed to be given, judge it proper to acquaint the Public, that as they had no hand either in compiling or publishing a late performance, intitled, in the first edition, *A Form of public Prayer for Morning and Evening, &c.* and in the second edition, *A form of common Prayer for Morning and Evening, &c.* so neither is that work the *specimen*, concerning which they have occasionally given some slight intimation in one of the foregoing papers. Nevertheless they think it but justice to that performance to declare, that they have no intention by this advertisement to do it the least disparagement, nor indeed to pass any judgment upon it, chusing not to meddle where they have no immediate concern, and leaving to all others that freedom in judging, which they desire to enjoy themselves.

